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ROLAND PERCIE:

OR,

THE ELOPEMENT.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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THE ELOPEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT a time for hope is spring—gay smiling spring! She comes, with her bright green garb, to enliven all nature after the bleakness of winter, and the sweet songs of her warblers invite us to rejoice. It is the peculiar season of the young—the season of joyful anticipations—the summer with its varied pleasures is in prospect; the cold sterility of winter is forgotten

VOL. I.

B

in this sweet, budding time ; and hope, that blessed accompanier of youth, is busy in looking forward to joys to come.

The 27th of April, in the year our tale commences, was as lovely a spring day as ever shone forth to gladden the earth ; it was a day which had been eagerly anticipated by the family at Coomcarne Park ; a day that was to bring to a happy home, a young and beloved daughter ;—the sunset of this beauteous day had come, and never did a fairer scene appear than that which welcomed the young Charlotte O'Carroll to her fatherland, after three years absence at a Parisian school ; the trees and hedges were in their fresh, spring clothing, and the extensive park, through which the avenue wound, looked like a flower-garden, so bedecked was it with cowslips and primroses, and blue-bells ; yet Charlotte, dearly as she used to love culling those sweet, hedge flowers, thought now only of reaching that home where she would

be greeted with many a fond and loving welcome. The drive through these familiar grounds seemed the longest she had ever taken, so anxious was she to reach those dear relatives, and on arriving at the house she sprang from the carriage, which conveyed her and her father, at the risk of breaking at least her leg.

“A thousand welcomes, dearest Lotta,” exclaimed her mother who awaited her arrival at the hall door; folding her in a long and tender embrace—and there were her brothers and sisters, her former governess, and all the old servants collected together to bid their favorite welcome. And was not Charlotte happy? Did she think she could ever cause those beloved ones a moment’s uneasiness? She was again at home among her childhood’s scenes, now emancipated from all school control, and blessed with fond and indulgent parents; and she was a warm-hearted girl, devotedly attached to her family.

That night, ere she retired to rest, she devoutly thanked the Almighty Disposer of all events for having so abundantly blessed her with this world's best gifts.

The next morning dawned in summer brightness, and with many joyful anticipations of pleasure, Charlotte hastened to meet her family assembled in the breakfast-room. A play-day was willingly granted to the children, and before evening she had explored every well known haunt of her childish days; her old favorite dog, Tim, who with true canine sagacity had recognised her, was reinstalled as attendant of her rambles; her pony, grown too old for use, was caressed and fed; and Charlotte returned to join a merry dinner party, believing there was not a happier girl in Ireland.

Mr. O'Carroll, the grandfather of our heroine, was the only child of an Irish gentleman of a very respectable Catholic family, and poor as most Roman Catholics were during the last century. He had married very young, and on

his father's death sold off the remnant he possessed of his ancestors' estates, and went with his family to reside in Spain. Here, by a series of successful speculations as a merchant, he amassed a large fortune. An epidemic fever, which raged in Madrid, where Mr. O'Carroll and his family resided, cut him off in the prime of life, and his widow did not long outlive him. Their only surviving child, Henry, was sixteen when he lost his parents, but in his guardian, Don Manuel de Solis, his father's particular friend, he found a second parent; he finished his education under his directions, lost his heart to the young and beautiful Camilla de Solis, his only child, and then was sent to travel.

After a lengthened tour through Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and France, he passed a year in Ireland, and seeing advertised for sale a large property which, in former days, had belonged to his family, he became the purchaser, repaired and enlarged the ancient dwel-

ling place, returned to Spain, asked and obtained the hand of Camilla, brought his bride to her new home, and then, blessed with every comfort, they lived in happiness surrounded by a youthful and promising family.

THE ELOPEMENT.

CHAPTER II.

MR. O'CARROLL was a man of singular amiability of character, yet possessed of every manly and honorable feeling; a fond husband, and a good father, firm in the discharge of what he thought right; yet indulgent to his children almost to a fault.

Mrs. O'Carroll had all the soft feelings of a southern, with sufficient energy to make her a most attentive wife and mother; devotedly attached to her husband and children, their

wishes were laws to her—her beauty had been famed, and her children, of which she had five, retained traces of their Spanish origin in the brightness of their dark eyes, and finely formed features.

Manuel, the eldest, was at the time this tale commences, just entering his twentieth year; he was a talented, kind-hearted young man, with a degree of indolence of character; and unfortunately for the indulgence of this disposition, his future prospects precluded the necessity of any exertion, for he was heir to his maternal grandfather's wealth.

Charlotte, the heroine of our tale, had just completed her seventeenth year; she was peculiarly her father's idol, perhaps from the very fact of her being an exact likeness of what her mother had been, when she won his young affections. She was beautiful in the strictest sense of the word, and with that true charm of beauty, a seeming unconsciousness of its possession; her features were all moulded

in perfection's mould, and her blithe and very intellectual countenance was rarely decked but in smiles; yet her feelings had all that depth and quickness, so characteristic in most Irish girls. She was sensitive, with a warmth of attachment to her friends, yet withal a little inclined to self-will: this self-will, however, would show itself in so amiable a light that one could not help loving the feeling that often prompted her to take the part of an absent friend, though that friend was in the wrong, or persisting in disbelief of the discovered imposition of a mendicant, who with a tale of sorrow had moistened her eyes. Her temper was sweet—her education had been most carefully attended to—and now, on her entering the world—a world replete with so many charms to her—she felt as if to live were indeed a pleasure. Her joyous hopes of happiness amid her home circle were about to be realised—she had no cares for the future—it was an unknown, uncared for time, the pre-

sent then sufficed her, and she felt perfectly happy.

Henry O'Carroll, Charlotte's second brother, was two years her junior, a sweet, intelligent boy, with surpassing talents, almost too precocious for his years, yet playful and innocent as a mere child. Delicacy of health made his father remove him from an English College, where he had been studying with much ardor, and where he had gained the reputation of great talent. He was Charlotte's favourite—her correspondent during her "exile," as he termed her school days, and now to be her companion in all her walks and rides.

The two youngest children were Mary and Camilla, both lively and pretty, and very fond of their governess, Miss Maldon, who had lived in the family since Charlotte was three years old. She was a quiet and unassuming person, performing her duties with affection and exactness, and rarely needing punishment for her pupils.

Coomcarne Park, the residence of this happy family, was situated near the ocean, in the neighbourhood of a large town, in the south-east of the province of Munster. The demense was very extensive, and beautifully diversified by hill and dale, and these again by woods and green fields. A river meandered through the grounds, by means of which a large lake had been formed. This was surrounded by thick woods, except at one point, where a sloping, green lawn edged its bank; the avenue wound round at this spot, and nearly at the water's brink was erected a large summer house, adorned by every variety of creeping plants. The woods had thriven surprisingly near the sea side—walks and drives had been cut through them, and nature here, liberal in her gifts, had been seconded by art in making Coomcarne Park a most delightful residence. The father loved it as the ancient territory of his family; and the children all agreed in thinking such another place could not be found in the world; even

Mrs. O'Carroll, despite the olive groves and sunshine of her native land, preferred it to any spot on earth, from the dear associations connected with it. There she had come as a bride—there she had lived as a happy wife and mother—all the improvements around had been made under her directions, and it was her home—Who does not feel what a spell there is in that sweet word?

CHAPTER III.

A month had passed quickly over Charlotte's head in the calm enjoyment of a country life, when her father's birth-day approached, and on that day it was determined to give a ball at Coomcarne, at which she should make her *début* in the gay world. The neighbourhood was thickly inhabited by many respectable families, and the large town of W—— was but two miles distant: being a *depôt*, a regiment was always quartered,

so invitations were alone wanting to insure a good attendance. These were sent out, and very joyfully did Charlotte anticipate the pleasures of her first ball. What young girl entering life as she did, that would not feel similarly! The week before, all was gay preparations—the children's school-room, an immense, airy room, was metamorphosed into a ball room—the dining-room into a supper-room—and the drawing-room, library, and music-room, were appropriated to reception rooms.

The eventful day at length arrived, and after an early dinner Charlotte and Henry strolled out towards the green-house to gather bouquets—this they found locked.

“Ah,” exclaimed Henry, “old Peter thinks to save all his fine flowers; the like of which are not to be found on Ireland's ground,” added he, mimicking the old man's voice. “Indeed, Lotta, I saw he was greatly dismayed this morning seeing Miss Maldon and

you cutting every flower you could find in the gardens. He hopes to preserve his fine plants here I suppose from the hands of you, ruthless spoilers, but come, we have ample time, let us walk to his cottage, and get the key, for flowers I'll have."

So saying he took Charlotte's hand, and together they gained old Peter's cottage, which was near the ocean. Peter appeared to their summons, but no persuasions of Henry's could induce him to deliver the key. He would willingly go himself, and give the "sweet ladies" plenty of the best of flowers, the like of which are not to be found on Ireland's grounds.

"So my mother thinks," said Henry, "so pray, Peter, let her not be without a fine nosegay this evening, for Mrs. Cardon, who has the most beautiful flower garden in Munster, is to be here, and I fancy she'll have flowers far finer than yours."

"Finer than mine," cried old Peter indig-

nantly, "why then, Master Henry, I beg leave to differ with you ; for you see, sir, Mr. Waring, her head gardener, is noways as knowledgeable a man as I am ; and what makes fine flowers—only the knowledge of the culture like. He'd trate an inion and a Hoya Carnosa just in the same way I'm sure—the Englisher indeed ! But we'll see—we'll see whose flowers are best : " and away the old man hobbled, and Henry laughing said—

" Now, Lotta, allow I have gone the surest way to secure you the finest bouquets for the evening ; and as I have so skilfully attacked Peter's weak side for your vanity's sake, you must come round by the shore with me, it will only lengthen our walk about half a mile—you need take but a very short time to adorn your pretty person."

It was a lovely evening, and as the young ones walked along the sandy beach both seemed to enjoy the scene in silence. Henry was the first who broke it.

“Charlotte,” said he, “do you know these beautiful scenes in nature always make a feeling of sadness creep over me. I feel at times a vague dread that I shall be soon called from them—a dread, I say, for life seems so full of enjoyment, yet how often do we see the youngest, and gayest, and fairest, snatched from this earth.”

“Oh, dearest brother,” exclaimed Charlotte, “allow not these melancholy forebodings to dwell in your thoughts such an evening as this. Think only on all we have to make us happy.”

“I feel it, dear Lotta,” answered he, “and to-night you will see me the gayest of the gay.”

The tide was rising, so they hastened on, and reached the spot where they intended turning homewards—here a rustic seat had been constructed under a spreading beech tree, and Henry seated himself, declaring he felt fatigued;—Charlotte followed his example with a look

of tender anxiety at her brother's flushed cheek. The boundless ocean lay before them, decked with many a sail; from the graceful yatch, with its snowy sails and colours flying, to the dingy looking trading ship, and heavy hookers; the songs of the sailors came cheerily across the bosom of the tranquil sea, the surface of which sparkled in glassy peacefulness, except near the shore, where the swell rising broke along the beach in one long line of foam.

“I love to gaze on the tranquil ocean,” said Charlotte. “I never can see it without thinking of the delight sailors must feel when a calm succeeds a dangerous storm.”

“And I,” exclaimed Henry, “love to look on a rough, boisterous one; it is then the ocean is seen in its majesty, and the Almighty Power that rules the winds and waves, admired and adored. Now, Lotta, mark that swell or wave approaching the beach. Do you see its

smooth surface gilded by the sun's rays? And now observe, when it rises to its full height all is dark on this side, and now it breaks, and bursting flows angrily to the shore; that is a true picture of human life, dear, the tranquil and bright time of happiness, the darkness of sorrow, and the roughness of adversity. Such is too often this world's change. Oh, my dearest sister, may your life be uncheckered and unclouded by grief—" tears gathered in the young speaker's eyes.

" Henry," said Charlotte, " your low spirits are infectious—we must delay here no longer—come to where happiness awaits us in its most endearing form—we have lingered too long."

They rose and gained the green-house where old Peter had despoiled many a goodly plant and shrub of its beauteous blossoms. Charlotte made three bouquets, reserving some rose-buds and sprigs of myrtle for her father's and brothers' button holes. She then hastened

to her room, and assisted by her foster sister, Ellen Connor, who had been raised to the rank of her waiting maid, made her toilette ; and certainly never was toilette completed with less vanity and more joyous feelings.

CHAPTER IV.

CHARLOTTE entered her mother's dressing-room, but this was deserted, and gaily tripping to the ball-room, there found her with Miss Maldon, busy in directing where the lights should be placed ; she presented her bouquets, and received an affectionate embrace from each, with a fond wish that this ball might be the commencement of a long and happy life,

Mrs. O'Carroll looked yet a very lovely

woman, and she gazed in silent admiration at her beautiful daughter. Charlotte was very simply attired, in white crape, and by her father's desire she wore no ornament whatever ; her figure was slight, but graceful, and she moved with ease and animation.

" Lotta dear," said Mr. O'Carroll, entering the room, " you are as simply dressed as ever was pretty puritan of yore ; let me try how these would look ;" and he opened a small box he had in his hand, and took from it a beautiful pearl necklace, which he clasped on her neck ; and fondly he kissed his darling child, wishing her many pleasant balls. " Here, Camilla," said he to Mrs. O'Carroll, " is your part of the present to our dear Charlotte," and he held out a case containing ear-rings, a brooch, and bracelets to match the necklace.

" Dear mamma," said Charlotte, " how pleased I am ; and see, here are your's and my dear father's pictures fastened to these bracelets—these indeed I will value doubly—how good,

how kind of you both. I must show them to Henry," and she hastened to seek her favorite.

She found him leaving her room, where he had been seeking her, and she showed her parents' gifts.

"Give me your hand," said Henry, and she ungloved a hand and arm of exquisite symmetry, "wear this little ring for my sake," continued he, "until some one that loves you 'for better for worse' gives you another."

"I'll always wear it for your dear sake," answered she, "and I'll always love you as dearly as I do now."

"You say so now, dearest girl," replied Henry, "but a few years will prove the warmth and capaciousness of that tiny heart—come now for there's the hall-door bell ringing, let us try if there will be any one in the ball-room to-night you will bestow it upon—perhaps young Charles Cardon—or William Masterton!" and laughingly they descended together.

What a wise and kind dispensation of Provi-

dence is that which shuts the future from our eyes—very surely Charlotte would not have enjoyed this ball had she known the sad realities that awaited her after life.

The guests all quickly arrived, and it was a gay and brilliant scene. The Irish resemble the French far more than they do the English in their manners and disposition—get introduced to one of the latter, whether lady or gentleman, at a ball, and if she or he be not of a peculiarly lively character, you will find it rather difficult to thaw the reserve you encounter; to look^{at} at them sometimes in a ball-room you would fancy they had come there to show how solemn and stately they could appear amid the gayest scenes. Meet an Irish girl, or an Irish gentleman, and before you are acquainted ten minutes you will feel like an old acquaintance; not that either are forward in their manners, but their natural liveliness, the ease of their conversation, and often their native talents will amuse and please you.

Dancing commenced, and was kept up with much spirit; Charlotte was introduced to many partners, all anxious to win the favor of the young *débutant*; some even hoping to call her their own, for the sake of her fortune which was supposed to be large, for gentlemen, despite romance, will too often marry for money.

Among those that paid her the most marked attention was Charles Cardon, an only son, and considered, according to the gossips of the town of W——, a very good match. Most assiduously did he court her favor, he saw, though with a feeling of chagrin, that Charlotte's smiles were dispensed alike to all.

The announcement of supper caused general regret. In going to the supper-room Charlotte was stopped by the crowd, and near the doorway drew back to let the guests all enter before her; she was standing by Manuel when her attention was attracted by the sound of her name pronounced in a strange voice before her.

She looked, and saw two young officers, with whom she had danced, seemingly deep in conversation.

“ Well, Harvey,” said one, “ I saw you were evidently smitten by Miss O’Carroll’s charms, I watched you very attentively as you were dancing with her. What were you talking about so confidentially ?”

“ Jealous, by the Gods, I believe you are, Walhouse,” replied Harvey, “ however, be not alarmed, our ‘ sweet converse ’ ran on the Emerald Isle, which I even lauded to the skies ; for I have not dwelt so long among the ‘ Wild Irish ’ as not to know how to win a fair, Irish lady’s smiles. Their devotion to their country amounts to idolatry.”

“ In praising the country, Harvey,” questioned Walhouse, “ I hope you did not forget your admiration of all its natural beauties ; and then you could have thrown in some hints of the Milesian blood—the Spanish eyes, &c. It were a pity to lose the opportunity of saying something that would have made a lasting

impression. The one who first talks of love to a young girl is sure to succeed."

"Credit me," said Harvey, "these Irish girls have more depth of sense and feeling than a casual observer of their lively manners would infer. Speak to them on any rational subject, and you will find them far more conversable than our English girls—touch on flattery, or love, or any subject that a short acquaintance does not warrant, and you will find them as distant and formal as our most prudish dames. Do you remember the lines of that poet of nature, Moore? I feel as if I should like to be his countryman, when I read his, sometimes, exquisite poetry:—

"In England the garden of beauty is kept,
By a dragon of prudery, placed within call;
But so oft this unamiable dragon has slept,
That the garden's but carelessly watch'd after all.
Oh! they want the wild, sweet-briery fence
Which round the flowers of Erin dwells;
Which warns the touch, while winning the sense, --
Nor charms us least, when it most repels."

“Bravo, Harvey,” exclaimed his companion. “Miss O’Carroll has certainly inspired you to-night; you are first philosophical, and secondly poetical—however, I think neither the one nor the other would secure this lady’s favour; for, believe me, the present race of young ladies will never, if they can help it, make a mere love match “*le bon vieux tems*,” for that, when my grandmother, an heiress, eloped with her husband, a penniless, younger son, like myself—”

“As it is in your family,” urged Harvey, “you ought to try your luck with this fair Charlotte. I will resign all claim on her.”

“Thank you in my sister’s name,” said Henry gaily, who had joined Charlotte at the conclusion of this conversation, “and she begs as a favour, if either of you expect even a smile from her, that you will forthwith move into supper, and there forget all the efforts she has caused you both.”

He led the way, and the young men

followed, looking rather confused. Charlotte merely treated it as a joke, yet determined if ever she married it should be for love. With regret she saw the guests depart, and she felt sorry that such pleasant hours were passed without recall.

“ I shall often enjoy as gay balls,” thought she, as she retired to rest, and slept soundly, undisturbed by dreams of future ill.

CHAPTER V.

THE next two months passed very gaily to Charlotte, for all the neighbouring families that had seen her début, in her home circle, were anxious to see her enjoy herself in others, and parties followed parties. Mrs. Cardon was the first to welcome the young girl into public life:—she was an English lady, who resided near Coomcarne Park and had married Major Cardon, for the sake of having a house of her own. Her wish was to

settle in England, for her husband was wealthy, but he would not hear of such a plan ; so they came to Ardglohane, his family place, near Coomcarne, which designation on her husband's death Mrs. Cardon immediately changed into Cardon Hall. She had two children — a son, Charles Cardon, lately of age, and a daughter Amelia, some years his senior. After her husband's death she continued to reside in Ireland, for though her son inherited a small estate in England, she forfeited her jointure if she allowed him to sell or let his Irish property. She was quite a woman of the world, determined her children should be well married, and when she saw Charlotte, and knew she possessed a good fortune, she resolved no effort of hers should be wanting to win her for her son ; for this reason most anxious was she to pay Charlotte every attention.

Charles Cardon, already introduced to our readers, was like, many young men with independent fortunes, who become early their own masters, possessed of a super-excellent

opinion of himself, and firmly persuaded no young lady, whom he deigned to smile upon, could refuse the offer of his hand. He was well looking, but bearing about him an appearance of self-conceit, and affectation of manner. Educated entirely in England, he professed to condemn everything Irish; yet when he saw the young Charlotte he was forced to acknowledge to himself that though Irish, she was almost faultless. He determined to ridicule her brogue, which he persisted in saying she must have; but he found her accent and pronunciation so correct, that the very Irishisms in her speech, with her sweetly modulated voice, he could not help admiring. He fell in love then, or fancied he did so—and very many young men, we know, often mistake the fancy for the reality. In real life, when time hangs heavily on the hands of the present race of idle, indolent young men, how often do they “get up a flirtation,” as they call it, to kill time—how thoughtlessly they

trifle with a young, inexperienced girl's affections, who unless she be gifted with uncommon sense and penetration beyond her years, will mistake their nonsense for honest attachments, and too frequently give her first and best affection, where it meets no return; her first essay then of lovers proves a bitter trial; and from an artless, amiable, confiding girl, she becomes a flirt—a coquette. Oh flirting! flirting! thou art sometimes a cruel pastime—the amusement of the hour makes many kindly feelings to be forgotten, and one that thinkingly would not be guilty of an ill-natured action, sacrifices at thy shrine in thoughtless folly, many sighs, and perhaps tears!

Amelia Cardon was an imitation in manners of her brother Charles, yet with even less of feeling than he had, for women, when wordly minded, possess less feeling than men; they have the paltry passions of envy and vanity, which the very manliness of the other sex makes them seldom indulge in. Amelia was

pretty and fashionable looking, and she entered the gay world, determined it should not be her fault if she did not make a good match. Rank and riches were her ambition; but she flirted most indiscriminately with all the marriageable offices quartered in W——, and she even sometimes condescended to try and induce Manuel O'Carroll to enter the list of her admirers; but Manuel was one who cared not for a pretty face, and Henry often laughingly, observed that Manuel would never be married unless he got some kind lady to ask him, "wait" he would say "until Amelia Cardon is some years older, and she'll do the needful for you, provided always that neither Duke, Earl, nor Viscount turn up to her share in the meantime."

Mrs. Cardon called one afternoon at Coomcarne, and learning that Charlotte was very fond of music, proposed that they should have a morning concert during the ensuing week.

“Several of the officers in W—— are good musicians,” said she, “particularly Captain Harvey, and I will engage their services, you will come to us early—say one o’clock on next Tuesday—and after the concert we shall have luncheon.”

The O’Carroll’s readily consented, and Charlotte, never fancying she should be asked to play or sing, was delighted at the prospect of this concert, for she really loved music, and also she liked any little gaiety as much as any young lady of seventeen ever did.

Mrs. Cardon arranged a programme of the music, and, with a very polite note, gave it to Amelia to send to Charlotte.

Amelia on her first introduction to Charlotte had taken a dislike to her; she beheld in her a powerful rival, particularly when she found she was far her superior in musical attainments; and when her mother gave the programme of the concert to her, she resolved that, for that day at least, she would eclipse

Charlotte's performance, she burned the billet, and intended giving Charlotte the programme on her arrival at Cardon Hall, hoping her mother would be too much engaged with her numerous guests to question Charlotte about the note, which was one merely requesting she would practise some of the pieces of music, and the songs marked in the programme, as she hoped for her assistance.

The day came, and all the company punctually assembled in the large drawing-room at Cardon Hall. Charlotte was seated near Henry at a window anxiously expecting the commencement. Miss Cardon advanced towards her, and giving her a programme said,

"Of course, Miss O'Carroll, you know all this music, and we hope you will aid our humble efforts by your musical talents," saying this she hastened away to speak to some other guests.

Charlotte blushed deeply, and turning to Henry said in a low voice,

"Now, dear Henry, it is very provoking that

she should expect me to play or sing; and look, there is scarcely a piece here I know—the first I can play certainly, but not one of those Italian songs do I sing. What shall I do?”

“Take courage, sister mine,” answered Henry, “Mrs. Cardon is too great a friend of yours to ask you to exhibit to disadvantage, and here she comes all smiles and bows.”

“Dear Miss O’Carroll,” said Mrs. Cardon, taking her hand very kindly, “I know I can trust to your kindness, so will you allow me to conduct you to the musicians. Or perhaps your brother will accompany you—you see they are preparing to commence, and we trust you will not think it a trouble to gratify us.”

“Indeed, Mrs. Cardon,” replied Charlotte rising, “I shall be very happy if I am able to oblige you, but in this programme there are only two pieces I know at all, the first and last but one; these of course I will play with pleasure, if you please, but if you would allow me to listen I should be delighted.”

"Only know two pieces," exclaimed Mrs. Cardon, "surely, dear Miss O'Carroll, with your musical talents you had ample leisure since Friday last to learn all. I sent you the programme then."

"I did not get it, I assure you," said Charlotte.

"Some mistake then must have occurred," answered Mrs. Cardon, the truth flashing on her mind, for she knew her daughter well, but she was too discreet to hint at it. "However, my dear girl," added she, "you will play those pieces you do know, and perhaps by and by favor us with one of your exquisite Irish melodies."

Charlotte rose and followed Mrs. Cardon towards the end of the room, where, round the piano and harp, were assembled the performers.

"Miss O'Carroll can play this overture, Amelia," said her mother to her in rather a low voice, "and another piece too—and then she will sing one of her native melodies instead

of those Italian songs, and I hope she will far surpass you," added she in a whisper.

Amelia threw back her head with a slight sneer, and sat down to the piano—Charles Cardon arranged the harp for Charlotte—and, taking up his flute, the concert commenced. A very great contrast certainly existed between those two girls—Amelia was most fashionably dressed, and sat at the piano with a most self-satisfied air—Charlotte was very simply attired in white, she had taken off her bonnet, and her long curls half shadowed her very beautiful face, her eyes were fixed on the harp, and she seemed very timid, but soon her musical taste made her forget it, and she played with exquisite skill and feeling. Amelia rose from the piano with annoyance.

At Mrs. Cardon's request Charlotte, joined by Henry, sang that beautiful song of Moore's, "on music" arranged in the melodies, their voices were sweet and accorded well; they both sang with thrilling pathos, and retired to their seats amid the loudest plaudits.

Amelia's best and finest Italian songs were almost unheeded after the beautiful Irish girl's melody, but Charlotte was relieved and delighted when she found herself again at home; whilst Amelia felt how unsuccessful her plan had been, and in her brother's praises of Charlotte's performance was continually reminded of her own failure.

CHAPTER VI.

DURING an evening ramble through Coomcarne Park, after dinner on this day, Henry proposed to his mother that she should get up some *fête* for the next week.

“ You know, dear mother,” said he, “ I must be off to college next month, as I am so robust now. Let us have something gay before I go, for decidedly a morning concert is not very pleasant.”

“ I am most willing, dear boy,” replied his

mother, "to gratify you, and I am certain so is your father. Are you not, Henry?" asked she of her husband, on whose arm she was leaning.

"Indeed, love, I am," said Mr. O'Carroll, "but suppose we give our consent, and let the young people arrange it as they please—let Lotta be the queen of the feast, and Manuel and Henry be her stewards, what say you, darlings?"

"Oh, father," answered Henry, "it would be just the thing, and if we get up something very pleasant we will invite you; and I propose we do not let you know until two days before; we can send all our invitations then, for formal, long invitations are detestable."

"Do as you please, dear children," said Mr. O'Carroll, "and I think if you all went now and held a consultation together in the summer-house it would be your very best movement,—we will not be curious."

Away bounded Henry, followed by Charlotte and Manuel, to the summer-house, where

they conversed a long time together ; and when they came back not one word could their father extract from them relating to their plans, except a conditional promise of hearing something very important on the following Saturday.

“ Remember, I will pay all the expenses, of this entertainment, my little queen,” said Mr. O’Carroll, wishing Charlotte good night, “ and take my advice—have it as soon as possible, for delays are dangerous.”

“ And recollect, Lotta, that you can give any directions you please to the housekeeper,” added her mother, “ and I promise not to know anything about it.”

“ Where are you going so early?” asked Mr. O’Carroll of Charlotte, whom he met next morning, immediately after breakfast, in her riding habit.

“ That is a secret, dear father,” replied she laughing, as she joined her brothers, who

were waiting below stairs for her, and very gaily they all cantered off.

Their destination was a beautiful glen, about two miles distant from Coomcarne Park, near which Charlotte's nurse had a very comfortable farm-house. The country was peculiarly wild round the glen, when it suddenly changed, and a spot of great fertility succeeded the barrenness. This oasis in the desert was entered by an old, ivy-clad bridge, which crossed a large and rapid river. The road wound round by the river's edge, and on one side of it was a steep ascent, thickly wooded with magnificent oak and ash, holly and birch; the varied tints of which contrasted beautifully with each other; with, here and there a fantastically shaped rock clothed with ivy and many coloured saxifrages, varying the scene; while at the other side of the noisy stream were occasional green patches, sloping towards the river, and beyond these the woods rose on a gradual ascent, which

formed the second side of the glen. The young equestrians quietly pursued their way through this romantic pass, with only occasional exclamations on its beauties. They had passed about half a mile through it when they reached nurse Connor's house ; situated on the mill side, and before it a grassy bank sloped towards the river—here they alighted, and after refreshing themselves with a draught of milk, proceeded, led by Henry, a few hundred yards from the cottage, to the spot they had come to visit. It was a small green open to the river in front, and surrounded on the other sides by thick woods, whilst, scattered on its surface, large oak trees spread their branches, and shaded the spot.

“ Will not this suit us exactly ? ” asked Henry. “ Under those beautiful trees our tables shall be spread.”

“ It is indeed a lovely spot,” said Charlotte, “ and the river has such a refreshing sound tumbling over those rocks.”

“ I never saw a place better chosen,” observed Manuel. “ I give you infinite credit, Henry, for remembering its beauties.”

“ Trust me, brother,” replied Henry, “ for having the organ of locality strongly developed. Come, let us consult nurse Connor about tables and chairs, and benches; and we must not forget the barn for dancing in if it should rain. We will defy the elements, though they should throw a *damp* on our enjoyments.”

Nurse Connor and her family were delighted to be of any service, and Henry, who seemed the most active, gave every necessary direction. The barn was a very large, boarded room; this was to be cleared and well cleaned, and decorated with flowers and evergreens. These arrangements made the gay young party return to a late dinner in high spirits.

After this Charlotte held a long consultation with the housekeeper—the invitations were all written and sent—many rides taken to the glen—and the expected day came, in summer

brightness. They were to have a cold dinner on the green-sward, and dancing after ; then tea, and dancing and refreshments in the barn, until the guests were tired. Musicians, the best W—— afforded, were hired, and after a very early breakfast Charlotte, Manuel, and Henry drove away to see that all the preparations were complete. Mrs. O'Carroll, her husband, Miss Maldon, and the children were to follow, to be there to receive the guests.

The morning was a lovely, cloudless one, with a gentle breeze, and Henry, as they drove along, declared—

“ If they had bespoken the day, it could not be finer.”

The tables were all laid under the trees, the trunks of which Charlotte and her brothers adorned with garlands of many colored heaths, the beautiful red berries of the mountain ash, and the bright yellow blossoms of the broom. The barn, or the ball-room as they called it,

was nearer, than the house, to the spot where the tables were spread, and by the edge of the river. Round it, inside, were ranged benches, and its walls were covered with green boughs; lamps were fixed in several places, and a temporary fire-place arranged in case the evening should prove chilly.

Mr. O'Carroll was delighted with all the arrangements, and the children ran about in ecstasies of pleasure at the gaiety and novelty of the scene.

At three o'clock the guests began to arrive, having been invited to come early. First the Mastertons, three young men, and two young ladies, all good-natured, and gay young people. Alice, the eldest daughter, a fair, timid girl, had been always a great friend of Charlotte's; they were people possessing a very small fortune, but highly respectable, and greatly esteemed by all the O'Carroll family. The Cardons came next, and with them a young nobleman, a col-

lege friend of Charles Cardon's, to whom Amelia paid great attention, but who seemed so wrapt up in himself, as to be insensible to her devotions—there were besides several belles and beaux from W——, with all the officers quartered there, and among them, Captain Harvey and Mr. Walhouse, both agreeable young men. Mrs. O'Carroll proposed to the young people to take a stroll before dinner, which was not ordered until five o'clock, to which they all readily assented.

“Will not you join the ramblers, Lord Mandorne?” asked she of Charles's friend, as he seated himself under a tree, when the other young people were moving off. “There is a very pretty waterfall a short distance up the glen?”

“Thank you—no—” he replied, “I am no admirer of Irish scenes.”

“Nor I either,” said Amelia, “and the day is so hot too,” and she seated herself—“here,

Lord Mandorne, I shall rest here—pray do not let me detain you, Mrs. O'Carroll," added she; and Mrs. O'Carroll, determined every one should enjoy themselves—took her husband's arm and sauntered after the merry group in advance. The company had separated into small parties—there was Charlotte and Henry, with Miss Masterton leaning on Manuel, and Charles Cardon walking by Charlotte. The parents had marked the young man's attentions, and Mr. O'Carroll observed to his wife—

“ You must know, Camilla, I begin to fear our Lotta really likes Charles Cardon; certainly in point of fortune he is a good match enough, but then his disposition is not amiable, and their religions too, differ—God knows I am no bigot, and I respect the good of every religion, thinking all worship the same Deity, with the same hope of Salvation, though under different forms. In a married life, husband and wife should be one in every thought, and on

this score, I object to mixed marriages—but did our child really love one differing in religion, I would consent to her marriage with him, for I can judge how I should have felt had I been prevented marrying my ‘first love.’ Dear Camilla, do you think she loves Charles Cardon?”

“Indeed, Henry,” she replied, “I do not—I have no fears on that head—Charlotte is too acute an observer not to see through the cold selfishness of his character, and too warm-hearted a girl to love him—she may like him well enough as an acquaintance, and nothing more. When Lotta marries, I hope she will get such a husband as her mother obtained, for she is one to love deeply and devotedly, but she must be loved in return.”

Every point of beauty about the glen was admired, and each returned to dinner seemingly pleased; even the apathetic Charles was obliged to confess that the scene, though

Irish, was a lovely one. And Charlotte, how did she feel—why, completely happy—there she was surrounded by her friends, without an unkind feeling towards one around her. The dinner passed off amid great merriment. Lord Mandorne alone seemed to feel no enjoyment, but in eating—a sneering smile or a monosyllable was all he deigned in reply to Amelia's attempt to draw him into conversation. Henry O'Carroll was seated near them and amused the Mastertons highly by an exact imitation of the young lord's insouciance. Toasts were given and replied to with that ready wit, so often enlivening such parties, and after a sufficient rest, dancing was commenced under the trees on the smooth greensward. Lord Mandorne danced but once, and then with Charlotte. Tea was served up in the ball-room, after which dancing was again resumed and kept up with great spirit until an early hour in the morning; when all returned home, by the beautiful, break-

ing day, much pleased with their day's and night's amusement, except Amelia, who could scarcely conceal her vexation, at the undisguised admiration Charlotte excited. What a hateful and baneful passion is envy—it destroys enjoyment and embitters life.

CHAPTER VII.

NEXT morning, before Charlotte had risen, Ellen entered her room with a note, which she said had been left by a messenger from Cardon Hall, but which required no answer. Charlotte hastily opened, read it, and blushed deeply—it was from Charles Cardon. She quickly finished her toilette, and sitting down re-read the note. It was a very simple and common-place one, merely requesting as a

favour that Miss O'Carroll would allow him to be her escort during her usual afternoon ride; her brothers she knew were to be engaged at a coursing party with the Mastertons, and she thought if she rode out, as she did nearly every day, Charles and she would be *tête-à-tête*.

"I will not ride to-day," was her instant determination, "why need he have written, he might have joined me as he has done so often before," thought she—"can he mean to say anything particular—yesterday he was too attentive to me?" And she sat pondering with very girlish perplexity—till her reverie was broken by the entrance of her little sisters.

"Mamma is in the breakfast-room, Lotta," said Mary, "and she sent us to call you down."

"Oh! Sissy," lisped little Camilla, "it is just one o'clock, and we never breakfasted so late before, and Miss Maldon will let us play all the rest of the day. Oh I wish we had a party in the glen every day."

"And I should not, Cammie," said Mary very sedately, "for then we should grow up ignorant and idle girls."

"Well, Lotta," said her mother on her entering the breakfast-room, "was not yesterday's a very pleasant fête? But you look pale and tired; a nice ride on horseback however will refresh you, though you must be satisfied with a groom's attendance, as even your father has gone to this coursing party."

"Indeed, mamma, I can give it up for one day, and take a nice, quiet drive with you."

"You must do no such thing, my dear Lotta," replied her mother, "for I know you prefer riding to driving, and besides I am much too fatigued to-day to stir out of doors."

The meal was a cheerful one, and loitered over more than an hour; as they were all lazily rising from it, Charles Cardon entered, and he remarked with pleasure Charlotte's confusion in wishing him a good morning. By

her mother's wish she accepted his offered services of escort during her ride, and truth be told she was not sorry to have her sanction for doing so.

Mrs. O'Carroll noticed with regret Charlotte's confusion, but she dearly loved her child. She knew her right sense and depth of feeling, and she deemed it better she should learn the truth of Charles's admiration from himself, and then act for herself. Charlotte never mounted her horse with such a feeling of timidity, but her companion soon put her quite at ease, by talking easily and cheerfully on the common subjects of conversation. Who has not found a ride on horseback, through a fine country, on a beautiful day, exhilarate the spirits; and Charlotte was the gayest and happiest minded of mortals. They had turned towards Coomcarne Park, and were riding leisurely along the sea shore, when Charles suddenly reined in his horse, and hesitatingly

confessed, the object of his riding with her that day was to tell her he loved her.

Poor Charlotte—it was the first declaration of the kind she had heard, and she felt confounded. She tried to say something, but failed ; Charles saw her confusion, and vehemently declared how dear she was to him—how fondly he soon hoped to call her his wife. Charlotte summoned up all her courage, and in a faltering voice, thanked him for his good opinion, but assured him she never could be more than a friend to him.

“ Then I have been most blameably foolish in allowing myself to hope there could be anything more than friendship between us, Miss O’Carroll,” replied he impetuously, and the sneering tone of his voice did not escape Charlotte’s observation. “ May I ask if a prior claim on your affections has caused me this cold refusal?”

“ Mr. Cardon,” said Charlotte, “ you have no right to ask me this.” She glanced at him,

he was pale, and looked agitated, and her womanly feelings prompted a kinder reply, and she added—"I assure you my affections are not engaged—they have not been sought—you know I am yet young and inexperienced, and if I have been the cause of giving you pain, believe me it was unwittingly. Let us be friends, but nothing more—we should not suit each other."

They rode on in silence, and on entering the avenue at Coomcarne Park, Mr. Cardon asked Charlotte, in a subdued, cold voice, if he might write once to her, and she assented.

What woman with a kind feeling at her heart, does not feel a something almost amounting to liking towards the man who first tells her he loves her—she may be sought and won by the rich and noble, and she may either marry for love, or marry to better her condition in life, or she may not marry at all, and still her first proposal will be remembered, and its proposer kindly thought of.

Mr. Cardon assisted Charlotte to dismount— bowed a stiff farewell, and when next they met how different were their positions. The next day's post brought Charlotte his letter. It contained chiefly reproaches for encouraging his addresses, but renewing his proposal— Charlotte's reply, dictated by her mother, was sensible and ladylike, declining his offer. Charles departed the following week for England, and married at Brighton, in a few months, the wealthy widow of an Earl, who having espoused her first husband for his rank and riches, married her second for love, and went to reside on the continent.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE autumn commenced in richness and beauty, and Henry, who had apparently quite recovered his health, was preparing to return to his college, when Mr. O'Carroll received a letter from Madrid, informing him of his father-in-law's death, and conveying his dying request that Mr. O'Carroll and Manuel would immediately proceed to Spain, and arrange his affairs. Mrs. O'Carroll so

deeply mourned her father's death that her health suffered, and by the advice of physicians change of air was determined on. To Exmouth therefore, all the family went, and when Mr. O'Carroll saw them comfortably settled there, he and Manuel proceeded to London, and from thence to Madrid.

Henry's departure for college was put off until their return, and by his fond attentions to his mother, he made her feel less the loss of her husband.

They had a large house, with a pretty garden, facing the sea, and lived for the first three months in quiet retirement. Charlotte and Henry daily rode out together; during which they frequently met an elderly and delicate lady, driving or walking, and always attended by one or two young men, both extremely good looking; they remarked their assiduous attention to this lady, whom they concluded to be their mother, and they admired them for it.

One afternoon Henry hired a boat, and promising to take very good care of Mary and Camilla, and Charlotte, took them a boating excursion up the Exe; he prevailed on Charlotte to take her guitar, to which she sang some very pretty Spanish airs, taught her by her mother, and to which he generally sang second; they for some time observed a small boat closely following them, rowed by two young men. Charlotte and Henry had just ceased singing a beautiful Spanish duet, when their pursuers, as they appeared to be, commenced a song which they sang very prettily together.

Charlotte was delighted, and Henry bade their boatmen rest on their oars, the young men too ceased pulling, and both boats floated on gently with the rising tide. Their song ended, Henry urged on his men, for it was getting late, and he wished to show Charlotte a particular point of view on the river, before they returned to Exmouth.

The young men, anxious to keep near their boat, raised a lug sail, which nearly proved fatal to them, for a sudden squall upset their boat, and both young men were precipitated into the water; both sank, and their boat was quickly drifted away. Henry did not lose his presence of mind.

“Oh save them,” exclaimed Charlotte.

The sailor who was at the helm turned the boat. Henry was an excellent swimmer—he threw off his coat, and before any one knew what he was about he jumped into the water; both young men were struggling in the stream; one seemed to know how to swim, but he was encumbered by a large coat; the sailors held an oar to him, and brought him into the boat, and Henry, with manly effort, succeeded in rescuing the other from drowning, and hauled him almost insensible to the shore; those in the boat were glad to land, and fortunately a small cottage was near the water's edge, to which Charlotte with her two frightened little

sisters hastened, and prepared its inmates for the arrival of the young men, who were assisted to it by Henry and the boatmen. A cheerful fire was blazing, by the warmth of which they were both soon restored to consciousness.

“Lotta,” said Henry, approaching her as she sat in a window with her two little sisters, “do not you recognise these young men—they are the constant attendants of that delicate lady; how fortunate we have been in rescuing them; but, dearest sister, you look as pale and nervous as if you too had been immersed in the briny waters,” and he laughingly shook his wet clothes.

“Indeed, Henry, it is now I feel frightened, when I saw all in the water, I was surprised at myself, I felt so completely stunned, but now I shudder at the danger,” and she trembled violently. “Will not you though dry your clothes, dearest brother—remember your cough of last year. The children and I will walk in the garden, and wait until you are all ready,

and make haste, for you know we shall be anxiously expected by mamma."

"Do then, Lotta, and when we are dry and 'presentable,' as old Peter would say, I'll manage the introductions; and now go and recover your bloom, or you have no chance of winning the hearts of those unknown—why the bloom has returned, ah! sister mine, take care."

Charlotte quitted the room and wandered in a small, pretty garden for nearly an hour—at least it seemed an hour to her.

When Henry at length joined her, he told her "he liked their new acquaintances greatly, particularly the youngest," added he, "but here they come, and I'll introduce you, Lotta," and he did so in a very graceful manner.

"We must introduce ourselves, Roland," said the eldest young man with a smile, "this is my brother, Roland Percie, Miss O'Carroll."

"And this is my eldest brother, Barton Percie," laughingly added the youngest. "And

we feel very happy," said both, "at the chance acquaintance."

"It is one I have long wished for, Miss O'Carroll," observed Roland Percie in a low voice, as he handed Charlotte to the boat. "We have met many times."

A deep blush was her sole reply. The tide was now going out, and their row back to Exmouth was a very quick and a very agreeable one. They landed near the O'Carroll's house, and Henry pressed the Percies very much to wait and dine with them—but they refused, saying, their father and mother would be uneasy if they were so long absent.

"Bad news spreads so quickly," said Roland Percie, "that they may hear of our danger, and not hear the truth—so we had better go and show ourselves."

"If you will return and take tea with us," replied Henry, "I promise you a welcome from my mother and sister," and he glanced at Charlotte.

“ We shall be very happy to come,” said both young men, and thanking Henry very gratefully for his timely aid, they bowed to Charlotte, shook hands with the children, and walked away.

At nine o'clock the Percies returned, accompanied by their father, an elderly gentleman of most pleasing manner, who said he could not delay coming to thank Henry for his generous exertions in saving his sons' lives.

“ If you knew how dear they are to me,” said he, “ you would then know what a favor you have conferred — one I never, never shall forget.”

Mrs. O'Carroll received her guests very politely, and a feeling of mutual pleasure sprung up between the O'Carrolls and Percies at this acquaintance. Mr. Percie's good-humoured drollery quite won upon Henry and Charlotte, and both pronounced him to be a most agreeable man; and so he was; to a happy flow of spirits he added a sense and cleverness

of conversation; the children were delighted with him, particularly little Camilla, who told him in a whisper, "he was very like her own dear, dear papa," and even Miss Maldon, rather fastidious, declared him to be "a most plessant companion." Mr. Percie in wishing good night, said—

He hoped they should improve this chance acquaintance, "we ought to have met before, and we should have done so, I am sure, if I had been staying at Exmouth as my boys have been; but, Madam, I only joined my family two days ago," added he addressing Mrs. O'Carroll, "so we must now make up for lost time—good night—" and they retired leaving their new acquaintance greatly preposessed in their favor.

CHAPTER IX

THE next day, at an unfashionably early hour, Mr. and Mrs. Percie, with their sons, called and were received by Mrs. O'Carroll. Henry was engaged reading in his own room, and Charlotte was singing in a small music-room, which adjoined the drawing-room, quite unconscious of the arrival of any visitors. Mrs. Percie apologised for this early visit, but said she was so anxious to express to young Mr. O'Carroll her grateful feelings for his conduct

towards her boys—that she feared if she put it off, he would not be at home. Mrs. O'Carroll said he was in his own room, and rose to ring the bell—just then the sweet sound of Charlotte's voice reached the visitors' ears through the closed doors, and her mother advanced to tell her of their arrival, when Mr. Percie interfered, and begged they might be allowed the pleasure of hearing her song finished.

“For my boys,” said he, “speak in raptures of her voice; it was near proving a fatal one to them.” He then advanced, and gently opened the door of the music-room; they listened in silence; Charlotte sang with her guitar the little Spanish song of the evening before; she was seated near the window, with her back to the door, and she warbled on with all the perfection of her really beautiful voice, and one of the company at least thought he had never heard such a voice before. She ceased, and Mr. Percie entered the room say-

ing—"We have been taking an unfair advantage of you, Miss O'Carroll, and feasting our ears on your melody. I am not surprised it allured my sons into danger."

Charlotte's frightened start was highly amusing, she looked round as if meditating an escape, but Mr. Percie gaily took her hand and led her out to Mrs. Percie, her sweet, intelligent face suffused with blushes.

"Here, Mrs. Percie," said he, "is the syren, that nearly deprived us of our boys—but she proved more merciful than the syrens of old—she charmed them, it is true, with the sweetness of her voice—she allowed them to be saved from a watery grave, neither shrieking nor lamenting as most young ladies would do, but acting with common sense; and here she is now, promising to be very good friends with them for the future, and with their father and mother too."

Charlotte took Mrs. Percie's offered hand,

and gracefully replied to her kind wishes. Henry now entered and all engaged in cheerful conversation.

After an hour's pleasant chat, Mr. Percie rose and reminded his wife that her usual hour for driving had come, "I intend to prevail on those young people to join me in a walk, and perhaps you will induce Mrs. O'Carroll to take a quiet drive with you. Do, dear Madam," he added, "and I will take care of your children—it will even be an act of charity towards Mrs. Percie, for I plainly perceive she has no chance of her usual escorts, Barton and Roland, to-day."

"I shall be very happy," replied Mrs. O'Carroll, "if you all first join us to luncheon," and she led the way to the dining room where the repast was laid; here a half-hour was passed very agreeably, and then Mrs. Percie and Mrs. O'Carroll drove away, and Mr. Percie, with the young people set off on a ramble.

"Where shall we walk, boys," asked Mr.

Percie of his sons, "for this promenading up and down a terrace, though it may be very pleasant for belles and beaux, is not agreeable to my taste."

"You ought to consult the lady, father," replied Roland Percie.

"So I ought, indeed, Roland—what an ungallant old man I am; but will you excuse me, Miss O'Carroll? and now lead the way, and we, your humble slaves, will follow."

"Have you been to the Beacon Hill, Mr. Percie?" she enquired.

"No, I have not," he said, "so come, and as it is to be up a hill, you must take my arm."

"Oh," answered Charlotte laughing, "you forget I am 'a wild Irish girl,' accustomed to the rugged hills and pathways of my native land, and therefore quite too independent to take any assistance in walking up a hill like this, it would be very difficult to tire me; besides I have been fifty times up this walk

with Henry—it commands a very lovely view extending from Buryhead up to Exeter.”

Mr. Percie and Charlotte walked on a little in advance of the rest of the party.

“That song of yours, Miss O’Carroll, is a sweet one,” said Mr. Percie, “the soft Spanish goes so well to that beautiful air.”

“It was my dear father’s favorite song,” replied Charlotte, “I used to sing it every evening for him.”

Mr. Percie looked at her mourning dress, and she understood the look, and with her own peculiar *naïveté* told how they were circumstanced. Mr. Percie thanked her repeatedly, and said—

“Now, my dear Miss Carroll, though I am sure you have none of that ladylike failing of curiosity, I must tell you who I am. My father had four sons, and I being the youngest entered the church, married Mrs. Percie, and we have those two fine sons. My vicarage is in this county, about twenty miles from this place, it

is a sweet spot; you must all come then before you return to Ireland, and Barton and Roland will show you all the curiosities, from their pet monkey, Jacko, to the ruins of an old Abbey near us. Come hither, Roland," he added, to his youngest, and evidently favorite, son. "Will you promise to be very polite and attentive to Miss O'Carroll, if she should ever honor Marthorpe Vicarage with a visit?"

"Certainly, you may rely on it I will," said Roland, joining Charlotte with a very pleased look.

They walked on together talking merrily, till they reached the summit of Beacon Hill.

"This certainly is a lovely view," said Mr. Percie, "have you anything like this in your country, Miss O'Carroll?"

"Many like it surely," she replied, "and oh! others far, far superior. I wish you had seen our beautiful Ireland. Henry, would

not Mr. Percie admire our mountains, and lakes, and glens?"

"And your bogs, and your mud cabins, and the system of domestic economy practised in them—pigs and children all feeding together, aye, Miss O'Carroll?" asked Barton Percie.

Charlotte looked at the speaker, and a tear gathered in her brilliant eye, she hesitated—

"Pardon him, Miss O'Carroll," said his father, "he is an ignorant fellow."

Henry and Roland were a short distance off.

"I only hope, Mr. Percie," replied Charlotte, "that Mr. Barton Percie may soon gain a true knowledge of Ireland, not from books, but from personal observation, for through that medium alone can my well abused countrymen be truly judged; and I hope too," she added with a sweet smile, "that he will allow us the pleasure of proving to him that bogs afford us a cheerful fire; and that though they may partly disfigure our island, still, if all of it were as beautiful, as it is in parts, where would

be that variety that makes its best charm? And more than this, I will undertake to make him acknowledge in our poorest mud cabins he will find some whose honesty and amiability would adorn a palace; the pigs may share, with the hungry children, their poor meal of potatoes, but let him, a stranger, enter that lowly shed, and, if he be so disposed, the best of that humble fare is his with a warm welcome, without the smallest remuneration." And Charlotte looked up proudly.

"I really did not know you were so enthusiastic about your country, Miss O'Carroll," said Barton, or I should have taken care not to offend you. I am sure you might abuse England for ever, and it would give me no concern."

"You did not offend me I assure you," answered Charlotte, and I shall not take revenge by abusing your country, for I like it excessively, from the little I have seen. Had

we not better turn homewards, Mr. Percie," said she turning to him ?

"Come then, my fair Irish lassie," said Mr. Percie, taking her hand, "we will move, and Barton, my boy, let Beacon Hill remind you that if you wish to gain an Irish lady's good opinion, you are not to begin by abusing her country—Miss O'Carroll I should be proud of you for a countrywoman."

Henry and Roland now advanced, and Mr. Percie gaily recounted the dispute between Charlotte and Barton. They reached home soon after Mrs. O'Carroll's return; and Mr. Percie observing a vase of flowers, said he wished they might steal one or two for Mrs. Percie, for she was passionately fond of flowers.

"These are scarcely worth offering," answered Charlotte, "you see they are only common flowers, but if you come to our garden, we may be able to choose a better bouquet."

“ Will not you give me a peace offering, Miss O’Carroll,” asked Barton Percie, when she was pulling some flowers?”

“ Yes,” replied Charlotte, and she plucked a small sprig of garden heath—“ this you see is not the mountain heath, Mr. Barton Percie ; I would give you the latter if I had it, for I prefer the flowers that remind me of my dear Ireland, of its very bogs even, to any others, and she playfully presented it, and turned to finish her nosegay.

“ I shall be positively jealous, Miss O’Carroll, of my brother, if you do not give me too a little flower,” said Roland.

“ What shall it be then ?” asked Charlotte.

“ I would value a blade of grass touched by you,” he answered.

And Charlotte stooped picked a sprig from a herb which grew near her, and gave it to him.

“ Do you know what this little herb is,” he asked, as he took it. “ It is called canary

grass, and in the floral language means 'perseverance,' and persevere I will even to try and deserve a smile from you—more I dare not say now."

Charlotte joined the rest of the party, and presented her bouquet to Mr. Percie, who thanked her; and each parted much pleased with their new acquaintances.

CHAPTER X.

MR. PERCIE was, as he related, the fourth son of an English gentleman, who married young a beautiful, but penniless cousin, entered the church, obtained a very good living, and spent his life in happiness and comfort; loved by all his neighbours, as well for his strict attention to his religious duties, as for his devotion to his children, and his amiable and gay manner.

Barton, his elder son, was just twenty-four, and was studying for the bar; he was a well mannered, genteel looking young man, a little inclined to be satirical, yet despite this amiably disposed. Roland, his brother, was two years his junior, and was a singularly handsome young man, his person was tall and very slight, but elegantly formed; his features were all perfect; his deep blue eyes, and light hair, with his almost girlishly fair complexion, might have given him an effeminate look, but his air was very manly, his countenance open, with such a smile as once seen could not be forgotten. His was indeed a beautiful face, such a one as is rarely met with, as if to show what nature can do when in a kindly mood. Such a one as you might gaze on with pleasure and never cease to recollect.

He was a lieutenant in a regiment of foot, now on a six months' leave of absence.

Mrs. Percie, their mother, seemed to idolise her children and most devoted sons they proved

themselves. Her health was delicate, and she had removed to Exmouth, while her husband remained at his vicarage attending to his pastoral duties; for one month he had left them to join his family, and during that month not a day passed that they and the O'Carrolls did not pass some part of it together; indeed the young people seemed inseparable. Henry felt quite attached to the Percies, and Charlotte often thought when quite alone, on Roland's wonderful superiority to Charles Cardon; it was a dangerous thought to dwell on, and yet she could not help doing so. During her rides and walks he was always her escort. Mrs. O'Carroll never thought of making any remark on his attentions; she had been delighted, for her children's sakes, to cultivate these agreeable acquaintances, and Mrs. Percie's motherly love quite won her heart.

Some few evenings before the Percies' intended departure for their home, the O'Carrolls were taking tea with them—it was then the com-

mencement of December—Mr. and Mrs. Percie, in wishing good night, said they had a request to make of Mrs. O'Carroll, which they trusted she would grant—

“It is,” said Mrs. Percie, that you will all come to Marthorpe Vicarage for the Christmas—there, dear Mrs. O'Carroll, you shall be as quiet as you please.”

“And Henry,” added Mr. Percie, “will have some good sport shooting with our boys, and Miss Charlotte will have a companion she will like greatly in our niece, Emma Leslie. Now don't refuse us pray—remember what we owe you—our Vicarage is large, too large indeed; so I look on it as settled you will all come to us.”

And Mrs. O'Carroll yielded a graceful assent—her health had quite recovered its wonted strength, and her spirits their usual tone, and she dearly wished to see her children enjoy themselves.

The night before the Percies left Exmouth

was spent with their friends the O'Carrolls, and Henry proposed to Charlotte that they should all play round games, as Mrs. O'Carroll did not wish to see dancing so soon after her father's death. The young people, joined by Mr. Percie and Miss Maldon, sat in a circle; the chosen play was slip-the-ring. Henry had a pretty little ring, with Charlotte's hair in it, which she had brought him from Paris, and this he gave, cautioning all to take care of it, as it contained Charlotte's hair. The play proceeded in all fun and frolic, Mr. Percie always giving the ring to Charlotte, and asking Roland. At length a sufficient number of forfeits were gained—it came to Charlotte's turn to release her forfeit; this she was to do by going into the other room, and singing a song, and remaining there until some one went and released her. In a sweet, playful manner she sat down and sang one of her own beautiful Irish melodies, and before it was ended all the players had surrounded

her. She then claimed her privilege of getting a song, and Mr. Percie sang for her, with much feeling, an old Scotch ballad; this was followed by songs from all the others, and the night was far advanced when they went to supper. Charlotte found herself next Roland Percie, and why did she blush so deeply when he showed her Henry's ring, and then slipped it into his waistcoat pocket. Her abstraction was noticed by Mr. Percie, who laughingly bid her good night, adding in a whisper—

“My dear girl, if I were in your place, I'd be desperately in love with my son Roland.”

And when she sat musing by her fireside, she was forced to acknowledge to herself that she did love him better than Henry—her own dear brother—ah! no—but nearly as well; and she dreamed all night of the one to whom she had given wholly and entirely her guileless heart. And Roland was certainly fitted to captivate a young girl's love; he had been her

constant companion for a month—he seemed to love her too—his manner had told her so many times, and we know there is something very infectious in love.

The next day the Percies left, and how did Charlotte feel that afternoon when she strolled with Henry by their dwelling; they entered it, there was a small vase of flowers—flowers she had seen Roland pluck some days before; they were scentless, winter flowers, yet Charlotte thought one she stole from among them had a rare perfume. A long, delightful letter from their dear father that evening cheered their home circle; he hoped to be with them early in spring, he spoke of his father-in-law's generosity with grateful affection. Manuel was now the possessor of his large fortune, but like his father he wished to settle in Ireland; and selling his property caused a delay. To Charlotte, as his god-daughter, her grandfather, left £5,000, to be paid on the day of her marriage, for marriage ornaments as he

said, or when she completed her twenty-first year, if not married.

Mrs. O'Carroll retired to rest with a feeling of joy at her husband's promised return, but to shed some filial tears to think the father she had loved so dearly was gone for ever. Oh! for ever—for ever! it is a sad, sad sound to dwell upon; the young repeat it and forget it, but the old feel its truth!

CHAPTER XI.

THE festive Christmas season approached in frost and snow, at which Henry rejoiced, as he expected much amusement from shooting and skating, and Charlotte in secret regretted, for she knew it would deprive her of many hours of Roland's society. What a selfish turn love will give the most amiable disposition; if any one had told her some weeks previous that she would have thought of her own gratification

before Henry's, she would not have believed it possible, yet now she felt, that dearly as she loved that brother, his feelings had become a secondary consideration with her.

On Christmas eve the O'Carrolls left Exmouth for Marthorpe Vicarage, which they reached only in time for a late dinner.

Mr. and Mrs. Percie welcomed them with a warmth that made them feel quite at home, and the young men seemed very anxious to show they were welcome guests.

"This is indeed the happiest moment of my life, Miss O'Carroll," whispered Roland, as Charlotte followed her mother up stairs before dinner. "I wish you could feel how I have longed for it."

A smile and a bright blush was her sole reply.

On descending to the drawing room, the O'Carrolls found, in addition to the family, a Mr. Edward Percie, a brother of the Vicar's, with his wife, and a little boy; a Master

and Miss Leslie, a nephew and niece of Mrs. Percie's, the former about Henry's age, and the latter about twenty. The house was large and very comfortably furnished, there dwelt an air of peace and comfort around, and Charlotte thought an indescribable charm, which seemed even wanting in her own happy home.

Kind reader—have you ever been in love? I do not mean that sober, sensible love of middle age—but the first love of warm-hearted youth, when sense is not thought of, and the one alone remembered. If you have felt this, you can fancy Charlotte's love.

The evening wore cheerfully away, and at an early hour the travellers said good night. Henry whispered a passing caution to his dear Lotta as she left the room—it was a useless one.

A gentle tap at the door of Charlotte's chamber disturbed a very pleasing rumination, in which she was indulging, she opened it, and Miss Leslie entered—she was a pale, and very interesting looking girl, with a deep, settled melan-

choly, that at once won Charlotte's pity—her eyes, of the darkest grey, were beautiful, but seldom raised, and when they were, their sad expression surprised in one so young. She now timidly advanced, apologizing for the interruption, and said she had forgotten something in a closet adjoining ; and opening a small door which Charlotte had not before perceived, she brought out a pile of books.

"I trust I have not been the cause, Miss Leslie, of depriving you of this room," said Charlotte.

"Oh no, Miss O'Carroll," replied Miss Leslie, "but that closet window commands such a sweet view, I often come to read and work there. My bed room is at the other end of the corridor. These two rooms belonged to Barton and Roland, when they were little boys; they were their play-rooms; and my aunt choose them for you, as they both command beautiful prospects; the windows of this room overlook the gardens."

“ How kindly thoughtful of her,” exclaimed Charlotte, “ but I hope you will continue to spend your mornings here during my stay, and I shall be delighted to join you, for I love reading and working.”

“ Thank you, Miss O’Carroll,” said Miss Leslie, “ but my aunt made me promise I would not indulge in my fancy for solitude during your visit, so I must try and exert myself and appear gay ;” this was said with a sad smile. “ I owe my dear aunt more than I can ever repay, she has acted a mother’s kindest part towards me, and most dearly I love her,” and a tear started to the fair girl’s eye.

Charlotte felt for her emotion, and in silence took her offered hand, and kindly pressed it.

She rose early next morning, and we trust may be pardoned for that feeling of awakened vanity which made her bestow unusual care on her toilette—her plain, black dress became her greatly, and if she had seen herself as others saw her, she might be vain for a very lovely

girl she was. She stood sometime at the open window gazing out on the scene before her ; the ground was covered with snow, and icicles hung in glittering bunches from the trees ; the view certainly was as lovely as a winter scene can be. The grounds around were beautifully diversified by hill and dale, and the numbers of scotch firs among the plantations of the valleys gave the woods a furnished look ; a river, moderate in size, flowed lazily along, seemingly afraid to disturb the peace of the scene ; and here and there by its banks rose many a pretty cottage, with little hedge rows, and gardens, and all that air of snug comfort peculiar to English cottages. At a short distance, through an opening glade, appeared the pretty town of Marthorpe, built on a hill-side, and the blue smoke rising gracefully through the clear air from its numerous chimneys added to its picturesque appearance. It was truly an English scene, and a peaceful stillness reigned around ; this was soon broken by a peal of bells from the steeple of the

village church, ushering in the Christmas morn.

“ A merry Christmas to you, sister mine,” exclaimed Henry underneath her window, aiming a snowball at her face, and there is my Christmas box for you.”

And the snowball fell on her head, and sparkled amid her beautiful curls.

“ Many happy Christmases to you, Miss O’Carroll,” said both the young Percies, who were with Henry.

Charlotte thanked them, and laughingly shaking her moistened hair, left the window, and hurried to her mother’s room to wish her the compliments of the season. She found her dressed, and her little sisters busy in examining Christmas gifts their mother had just given them in their father’s name.

“ He did not forget his darling Lotta,” said Mrs. O’Carroll, for here is a beautiful little watch and chain marked for you. He got all those pretty things in London before he went

to Spain, and forwarded them to me to Exmouth, desiring I should not open them until this day, and then give them in his name. May we be all as happy this day twelve months."

She fondly embraced her dear children. They all descended together, and were greeted by many kind wishes from their amiable host and hostess.

A merry breakfast party they were—Mr. Percie in joyous spirits, and even Emma Leslie looking less sad. He quizzed Barton and Roland about certain nameless dames, and Emma blushed, and Charlotte tried to look unconscious; his bluntness however was near being the destruction of Miss Malden's new, cashmere dress, for Miss Leslie, who was filling out some coffee, and who sat next her, let the cup overflow, and would in all probability have continued pouring it, had not Roland good-naturedly stopped her hand, and saved

Miss Malden's dress, though his own hand suffered from the scalding coffee.

"Mrs. O'Carroll," said Mr. Percie, when they had all finished breakfast, "if you wish to attend Divine Service to-day, you must lose no time in setting out; we have no Roman Catholic place of worship in our village; the nearest chapel is seven miles distant, and I have ascertained for you that prayers commence there at half-past twelve o'clock."

"I should indeed, Mr. Percie," she replied, "be very sorry to miss attending the services of this great festival. I am very much obliged for your thoughtfulness, and if you please I will now order the carriage."

They all rose from table. Charlotte was standing aside in a window, when Roland joined her and said—

"Will you deem it necessary, Miss O'Carroll, to accompany your mother to service? It is a long drive, and a bleak and cold one

such a day as this ;” and he pointed to the snow.

“ Our religion,” answered Charlotte, “ commands our regular attendance at mass on Sundays and Holidays ; it is a precept we always attend to.”

“ I’ll accompany you then,” said Roland, “ and perhaps you will convert me from mine evil ways.”

“ I should have a very bad opinion,” replied Charlotte hastily, “ of that person’s sense of religion, who would willingly, without a just cause, give up joining his own congregation on this Holy and solemn Festival, and going to one he believed to be in error.”

“ Can you be in error in any way ?” asked he.

“ I hope not in this,” said Charlotte. “ I am no bigot, though I think my own religion the best ; but I trust in the goodness of that Providence who will mercifully regard the good of every religion, and kindly

repay their efforts to serve Him in sincerity. It would be a sad and sorrowful doctrine, to believe that none but Catholics will meet hereafter in Heaven."

"And it would be truly sad to me," whispered Roland, "to think that Protestants and Catholics might not be united on earth."

She raised her eyes to his, but quickly bent them on the ground, and followed her mother to prepare for their drive.

CHAPTER XII.

THE O'Carrolls returned at a late hour from chapel, and Charlotte immediately sought her chamber, and having changed her dress, entered her mother's room, which she found empty; the peals of laughter which she heard below stairs induced her quickly to descend, and in the hall she found the whole company still in their morning dresses, assembled round Barton Percie, who was making his pet

monkey Jocko play all kinds of tricks for their amusement.

“ Oh, Lotta,” exclaimed little Camilla, running up to her as she joined the group, “ you’ve had such a loss, for the dear monkey has been so funny.”

“ Imitate a young lady’s singing, for Miss O’Carroll,” said Barton, and the monkey did so in a most ludicrous manner, and indeed seemed very willing to amuse his admirers.

“ Come,” said Mr. Percie, “ this is very good and very pleasant, but we must remember our dinner.”

All retired to change their dresses, but Charlotte, who, having made her toilette, went into the drawing-room ; inside this was a small sitting-room, opening into a conservatory. This room was adorned with family pictures ; there was a large one representing Barton and Roland as mere children - the former with a whip and

hoop, and the latter with his little arms round a large dog—a likeness, as Charlotte fancied, to her old pet Sam. Charlotte stood gazing at this picture. There was Roland—she could not mistake him—the same bright smile played on his face—that winning, arch look; she sighed very gently, —her sigh was echoed, —she turned and beheld the original of the picture she had been admiring.

“That is a beautiful dog,” said Charlotte, a little confused, “it is so like one I have at my dear home,” and Charlotte seated herself, and began reading apparently with great diligence.

Roland went into the conservatory and returning in a few minutes, with a small branch of myrtle, and a camellia in his hand, approached Charlotte.

“Will you wear these to oblige me?” he asked, in so gentle a voice, that she smiled. “I fear I forfeited your good opinion this morning, Miss O’Carroll,” he continued, “and

I assure you I prize it very highly, for I dare not hope for more," he sighed.

Charlotte took the flowers with a "thank you, Mr. Percie," and placed them in her bosom. She thought she ought to say something, but what it should be she could not tell, so an awkward silence succeeded. After a few minutes Roland seated himself near her, and seized her hand. She struggled to release it.

"Forgive me, Charlotte—Miss O'Carroll," he said in a low voice. "I fear I am foolish—perhaps presumptuous, but I love you dearly, and sincerely."

Charlotte snatched away her hand, and she rose from her seat.

"Stay, Miss O'Carroll—have I offended you? Say I have not! Say you do not dislike me! Oh, speak! Tell me, you forgive my folly—let us be friends at least."

Charlotte tried to speak, her voice seemed gone. She held out her hand—blushing deeply, and Roland pressed it, saying—

"Oh? forget what I have said, if it offended you."

Charlotte entered the next room intending to leave it, but the door opened, and Miss Leslie entered, followed by Barton. She cast a meaning glance at Roland, and then at Charlotte—and the latter thought her usually pale cheek was now of an unhealthy red. The rest of the guests soon appeared, the conversation became general, and the evening passed away with great merriment to all.

Mrs. Edward Percie was a gay, animated woman, her husband a cold, formal man, the very reverse of his brother, the Vicar; and young Leslie was a light-hearted boy, a very great contrast to his sister, but all joined in endeavouring to please.

Charlotte began next day by resolving to treat Roland as a friend, to avoid all *têtes-à-têtes* with him during her stay, and to enjoy the gaieties that surrounded her, but each day

proved to her that she felt an increased pleasure in his society. Staying under the same roof with a lover—a young and first love—is certainly delightful; you retire to rest, knowing you will join him in the morning, and you feel a separation from him during the day, enlivened by the hope of the evening meeting. Most true it is:

“ Oh ! there’s nothing half so sweet in life,
As love’s young dream ”

Charlotte fancied none perceived Roland’s admiration of her, it was so respectful; yet others did; though among them was not Mrs. O’Carroll; she was singularly deficient in seeing the growing attachment between them. She knew not much of the world’s ways; she had married young, the friend and playmate of her childhood, with her parent’s sanction. She now saw her children happy, and she rejoiced in it; no fear of Charlotte’s losing her heart to young Roland Percie ever disturbed her.

Nearly a week of their visit had passed—the mornings were devoted by the gentlemen to shooting, and skating, sometimes for the ladies' amusement. Roland more than once left his sport and returned early, to Charlotte's secret pleasure, and if she was incautious in betraying the truth to him, could she be blamed, so young as she was.

The evenings passed merrily in round games, music, and an occasional dance, for Mrs. O'Carroll begged dancing should be permitted.

In Miss Leslie, Charlotte found an acquaintance that delighted her much; her efforts to please were unceasing, and in her gentle and amiable sadness, with her apparent delicacy, there were charms to attract and give an interest to her character.

The last day of the year came, and the afternoon being a beautiful one, Emma Leslie proposed to Charlotte that they should take a walk to Marthorpe, to see her aunt's schools.

"They always get a thorough cleansing during Christmas week," said Emma, "so we shall see them in nice order."

Charlotte willingly assented, and both young ladies, equipped in winter clothing, set out.

There is something peculiarly exhilarating in a walk on a clear frosty day, and Emma even found her spirits revive; she had taken a great fancy to Charlotte, and she in return liked her extremely—Charlotte was giving her an account of their first meeting with the Percies when Emma interrupted her by saying,

"Pardon me, dear Miss O'Carroll, for my bluntness, but I must give you a friend's opinion, a friend's advice too; I am it is true, young, yet I have known much sorrow, and that brings on premature steadiness, I have often observed Roland and you together—he loves you—and it strikes me you love him—or only like him, is it?" and she turned towards her companion. "May I be candid," asked she?"

“Certainly,” replied Charlotte, in as firm a voice as she could command, “I wish you much to be so.”

“I have known Roland,” continued Miss Leslie, “since he was a mere child, we have been brought up together—he is warm-hearted and kind, the best of sons and of brothers, but has two great failings. A very quick temper, and an unsteadiness of character, are faults which in a married life will cause unhappiness; Barton is unsteady too,” and she sighed, “Do not blame me, dear Miss O’Carroll, if I offer you advice—try to check your feelings towards Roland—be to him a friend, and nothing more, I ought not perhaps to say so much.”

“Indeed,” replied Charlotte, “I feel very much obliged to you for this kind interest. It is true,” and she blushed as she said it, “I like your cousin, Roland Percie, better than any young man I have ever met—but marriage is yet unthought of by me—I am happy—ah,

much too happy in my present peaceful life to wish for change."

"So I once thought," said Emma, "my brother and I were left orphans at a very early age, and I came here to reside with my dear aunt Percie, and here I have remained except during my school days—our fortunes are ample yet what are they in comparison to a home, and parents to love one—this has been a home though to me, here I have met every kindness, and I am not ungrateful," she paused. "Two years since I went with my aunt to Tenby, for change of air, for a summer, and there I met one to whom I gave my whole heart, and I believed he loved me, for he often told me so, in accents you can feel but once; I returned here an altered girl, and my lover told me he would soon come to claim me as his own," she shuddered, "I never saw him after—he was in high life—fond of gaiety—he returned to the pleasures of London society, and last year he

died in a duel, fought about some gambling debt!" her tears fell fast, "I have tried to forget him," continued she, and sometimes, for a time, I succeed. Barton often says he loves me—he only loves me in a careless way, and I cannot return even that love. To avoid him I spent the last few months with Mrs. Edward Percie. My aunt is anxious I should become her daughter-in-law, but I cannot, no I never shall," and tears again choked her utterance.

"Compose yourself, dear Miss Leslie," said Charlotte, taking her hand, "Barton is good and kind, and amiable."

"He is," answered Emma, "but were he perfection, I would not offer him a blighted heart! had I never known George Darwin I might have been happy,—but I shall be so soon, for I feel gradually sinking into an early grave."

"Say not so, Emma," said Charlotte.

“ My mother died young,” replied she, “ of consumption, in the midst of happiness, and why should I be left on this cold earth—but I am saddening you,” added the amiable girl, seeing tears in Charlotte’s eyes, “ Come, forget what I have said; here are the schools—we will go into them.” They entered a beautiful, neat cottage of some extent, “ You see,” said Emma, “ they are in perfect order, they are under my dear aunt’s special directions, and at the end of every half yearly examinations she and uncle Percie give prizes to the most deserving.”

“ Perhaps you would like to see the church, Charlotte,” asked Emma when they had inspected all the school-rooms, “ there is a beautiful painted glass window in it, and some handsome monuments.”

“ I should like it very much,” said Charlotte, and they passed a half an hour in seeing the interior of the building.

Emma stopped by a newly made grave outside the church door and read the date.

“Here,” said she, “lies a fine young woman whom I knew well, she was only three months married and she died about a fortnight ago of fever—and here, near her, I shall be buried under this beautiful laurel—the evergreen is my choice of a tree over my grave, for it bespeaks immortality. Do not be surprised at my talking so carelessly of death. If you ever are made to feel the worthlessness of this world’s enjoyments, you will understand my feelings.”

“We have loitered here too long, Emma,” said Charlotte gently, “come, let us walk quickly towards the vicarage.”

They had not proceeded far, when they were joined by the young men, with their guns and their dogs. Charlotte thought Henry looked tired and flushed.

“I fear there will be rain to-night,” observed Henry, “for the wind is changing.”

"Oh I hope not for your sakes, gentlemen," said Emma. "I dare say you would all die of ennui, if you were confined to the house during the mornings."

"I hope it may rain, and heavily too," said Roland, "for then in a day or two, we should be able to ride to see the ruins of Delsarne Abbey."

"And then, Emma," exclaimed Richard Leslie, "you must finish your pretty sketch of the ruins; but I beg Miss O'Carroll's figure may be placed in the foreground, instead of young Mrs. Bimston's. You may remember, sister, how jealous her husband seemed of our admiration of her."

"He will never be so again, Dick," said Emma, "for we saw her tomb to-day—she died since of fever."

"Indeed!" said all the young men in sad and surprised tones.

"'Tis but a picture of this world's uncer-

tainty," replied Emma—"in life and health to-day, and withered and gone to-morrow."

The party reached home, and Charlotte gave full vent to her tears in the solitude of her chamber—tears the cause of which, if she had endeavoured to analyze, she would have found it difficult to explain.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Henry predicted, rain set in, and for two days continued so heavy, that the gentlemen were forced to give up their field sports, and remain in doors. One of them had felt no inclination to the *ennui* Emma had foretold. for Roland, in Charlotte's company, felt a happiness he had never known before, though her occasional coldness made him sad ; he resolved to seek an explanation of it, but she carefully shunned all attempts to induce her to

converse privately with him. The third day came in that, sometimes, beauty of a winter's day, that makes one forget they are still in wintry time; a general softness seemed to have succeeded the cold of the frost and snow; the sun shone brightly, and Henry, who was declared very weather wise, said "it looked too bright to last," however, a visit to Delsarne Abbey was decided on, and on horseback, and in the carriages, the whole party set out in high spirits. Charlotte, Emma, and Mrs. Edward Percie, were the only ladies on horseback, and the young gentlemen all accompanied them, Mr. Edward Percie gave his wife in charge to Henry, who proved himself, she said, a very careful and agreeable escort, and he drove with the Vicar.

They proceeded at a quick pace to the ruins — Roland by Charlotte's side, and Richard Leslie, by her request, at the other. She seemed studiously to avoid conversing with Roland, and tried all her agreeability in amus-

ing Richard. Roland soon perceived this, left her and joined Henry and his aunt.

“It feels cold, I think,” said Charlotte to her companion, “let us ride fast, and reach the ruins before the rest of the party.”

They cantered off, and soon reached their destination, which was about seven miles distant from Marthorpe.

“Will you get off your horse, Miss O’Carroll?” asked Richard, who had quickly dismounted, and stood by Charlotte’s bridle, proud of his being her sole escort.

“Yes,” said she, jumping lightly from her saddle.

Richard, in his haste to assist her to dismount, had neglected to fasten his horse’s bridle, which when the horse perceived he galloped off, leaving his rider to admire his giddiness; he fastened Charlotte’s horse to a tree, and apologizing for leaving her alone, ran after his own, which had turned towards Marthorpe.

Charlotte was not sorry to be left to herself, and she entered the Abbey, and wandered on admiring the beautiful ruins; the handiwork of man, holding out for ages, bearing the marks of its very strength in its gradual decay. She reached a small doorway, and passing through it came on an enclosed court; from this she issued by an archway, and found herself on the edge of a green descent sloping down to a river's bank, which flowed on calmly as if afraid to disturb, by its noise, a scene, so ancient and so holy. A small, stone seat was here, and Charlotte seated herself, and began thinking of what mostly occupied her thoughts—of Roland.

“He does not really love me, thought she—Emma was right—he is unsteady.”

A deep drawn sigh and a few girlish tears escaped her; she brushed them away, and rose determining to join her party, and put on a gaiety she did not feel. Roland

appeared as if seeking her, and he looked agitated.

“Miss O’Carroll,” said he, “Richard told me you were alone, and now grant me five minutes’ conversation. Sit down—we will await our party here—they are back some way, for a trace of my mother’s carriage broke.” And he made Charlotte sit down.

A half an hour passed, and Roland had again confessed his love in all the glowing ardour of youth, and drew from Charlotte a timid avowal of her feelings towards him; and there in that retired spot, Roland vowed he had never loved but her, and that she alone should be his wife, or he never would marry. He produced a ring—a pretty one it was, the designs forming a “forget-me-not,” of pearls and turquoises! — he put it on Charlotte’s slender finger, and asked her, in love’s most persuasive accents, if she would wear it for his sake, until he gave her another ring, and

she promised. She thought not of the difficulties that lay before her, ere she could marry Roland Percie — she only, with youthful thoughtlessness, dwelt on the present time. Hitherto indulged in every wish, she acted according to the impulses of her heart, and she then felt no regrets. Roland showed her Henry's ring, which he had kept since the evening at Exmouth.

"I will preserve this," said he, "dearest Charlotte, as it contains your hair, though it is useless as a remembrance; I require nothing to remind me of these happy moments—but I must get *one* promise from you—and it is a simple one. My first request you will not refuse," and he took her hand—now not withdrawn, "your lips could not utter a harsh—no, I am sure," continued he, "say yes, Roland."

"Yes Roland," she replied in the lowest and sweetest tone, blushing as she spoke his name for the first time.

“ Thanks, dearest, and now for this request ; you have acknowledged you love me — that I love you, and how devotedly, you cannot doubt. I am young you know, and at present, only a lieutenant in the army—but next year I hope to be a captain, and then I may claim your hand—I do not doubt your constancy, but I ask you to mention to none our engagement—let it be a sacred and secret link between us until we meet again. Fear not that I can forget you—and now, ere we are disturbed again, say ‘ yes, Roland,’ ”

Charlotte hesitated—the party were heard approaching.

“ I shall believe you do not really love me, if you do not promise,” said Roland hurriedly. What could she do — she answered quickly—

“ I will do as you please.”

Emma and her brother first joined them, and the former noticed their confused looks, whilst

Richard, after telling Charlotte how gallantly he had captured his run-away horse, felt rather surprised that she heard him in silence, when she ought to have applauded.

“She is changed certainly, within this last half hour,” thought he, “for she was the gayest and most agreeable girl I ever met, when we were riding hither,” and he followed his sister down to the river’s edge, and assisted her across some rude stepping-stones, which had been placed at this point across the river. Emma called to Charlotte to join her, and placing her at a short distance, sketched her figure in the foreground of her drawing.

“Now Richard,” said Emma, “show Charlotte that view round the corner of the Abbey—it is best seen from that point; and Roland, come—do not leave me, but like a good, obliging cousin, sit down and sharpen my pencils, for I am in a hurry with this drawing.”

Both obeyed her, but Roland did not do so with a good grace, however, the drawing was soon completed, and he and Emma hastened after Charlotte and Richard.

“ I think Henry’s predictions of the weather are too soon to be fulfilled,” observed Roland, “ for see, a heavy shower is approaching—let us hasten to the shelter of the Abbey walls, there is no house near.”

He gave Charlotte his arm, and they turned to retrace their steps ; before they gained the stepping stones, however, a very violent winter shower came on, which completely drenched them ; and when they joined the party, who were all sheltered in an old vault of the Abbey, their clothes were wet, and Mrs. Percie declared they looked very like two heroines of romance.

For nearly an hour the rain fell in torrents, and Mrs. Percie, expressed the greatest fears for Emma, who was obliged to remain in her damp dress, but to venture out was madness,

and the carriages and horses had been sent, before the rain commenced, to a neighbouring farmer's house. Charlotte laughed off any fears expressed for her, saying she was a hardy mountaineer, and the many whispered fears from Roland, made her rejoice in the wetting.

The rain cleared off, and Charlotte and Emma mounted their horses, with commands from all to ride quickly home.

How different were Charlotte's feelings from what they had been during her ride in the morning—she was glad to have a quiet hour to herself before the dinner bell rang.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next day Charlotte and Emma were compelled to remain within, and take every precaution against cold, though the former asserted she scarcely ever remembered having had one, and the latter declared she felt quite well; however, in the evening she complained of a head-ache and a shivering, and next morning awoke very feverish with a violent cold. Most carefully did Charlotte nurse and tend her, but on the third day of her illness, the day

Mrs. O'Carroll had fixed to return to Exmouth, the doctor, in attendance, pronounced Emma in a high fever, and Mr. Percie hurried his guests from the house, lest they might catch the infection. Charlotte gently urged a request, to be allowed to attend on Emma, but she was not permitted to do so, and she feared to press for permission, lest any one should suspect her secret attachment to Roland.

Mr. Percie handed them to their carriage, promising to send regular accounts of Emma — and they left the Vicarage with regret.

For some days Emma's recovery seemed very doubtful. She was on the verge of eternity — unconcious of it — but slowly her youth triumphed over disease, and for a time she lingered. At the end of six weeks she was taken to her friends at Exmouth, for change of air. How attentively her wishes were complied with by all around her ; and how assiduously Charlotte sought to amuse and please her.

Her cousins, Barton and Roland, often rode

to see her, and many delightful interviews the latter enjoyed with our heroine ; talking over their future plans. Roland at each interview pleading for permission to write to her, when parted, if only once ; with a lover's eloquence he argued away Charlotte's scruples, till at last she yielded assent to receive a clandestine letter.

But time, spend it ever so delightfully, will pass, and the quicker seemingly from its pleasantness. Roland came one day with a heavy heart, for he had to join his regiment in a distant part of England.

"Charlotte," said he, "in parting, I have this morning told Henry of our engagement—he asked me for the ring—but he will not betray us."

"*Betray* us, Roland," exclaimed Charlotte, "what a word—dear, dear Henry—I am delighted he knows all—it will be such a pleasure to speak to him about you."

"You may find fault with my words Miss

O'Carroll," replied Roland, "but do not do so with the feelings that prompt them," and Charlotte sighed to see him look really angry.

"Miss O'Carroll, Roland, is it," asked she, with a sweet smile, "forgive her." The lovers' quarrel was quickly made up," and they parted.

A month saw Emma Leslie apparently in her usual health, and as February was now passed, Mrs. O'Carroll was anxious to return to Coomcarne Park, to prepare for her husband's arrival. She urged Emma frequently to return with them, but she would not ; and Mrs. Percie promised, in her name, that during the coming summer, they would pay her a long visit ; so they parted, hoping to meet again in health and happiness ; though Charlotte, as she assisted Emma into the carriage, marked with grief, her still sunken cheek and changing colour.

Another month and the O'Carrolls were again

comfortably settled in their home, most joyfully anticipating the return of Mr. O'Carroll and Manuel.

Charlotte resumed her usual rides, but they were often passed almost in silence, or when speaking, talking only of Roland, for Henry was entirely in her confidence, and, in the praises he bestowed on the object of her ardent attachment, won additional love from Charlotte, at least, she now gave him credit for discrimination of character, and she valued his opinion.

Mr. O'Carroll and Manuel landed at W——, and hastened to Coomcarne Park, where a large bonfire blazed to welcome them home, and a happy circle they formed that evening assembled round the fireside. Each had much to tell, but Manuel spoke chiefly of a travelling companion they had met, a Lord Archgolle, whilst Mr. O'Carroll echoed all his son's praises; and Charlotte longed, as she

gazed on her dear father and brother, that they should know Roland — then she sighed when she thought of the difference of their religion, a subject on which she had often heard her father's opinion, but she speedily chased away every sigh with a hope for the future.

Oh ! happy time of youth, when hope gilds each coming event with bright visions of bliss ! Charlotte had now been a year in the world, and was she changed since then ? Her father remarked that she had become very serious, and thinking that she felt *ennuied* with the quietness of her present life, proposed to his wife, that they should travel.

Charlotte was consulted, and asked which she would prefer, a tour round the Scottish lakes, and then the English, or a more lengthened, continental tour. The beauties of their own land they had all visited. Had she been asked the same question eight months before, how gladly would she have

chosen the latter ; but now England had a magic in it, which she could not resist.

“ How glad *he* will be to see me,” thought she, “ If we should meet. If I knew his address, I think I should write—his regiment was stationed at Durham when we parted—but he did not write to me as he said,” and she sighed.

July was determined on for the commencement of their tour. Miss Malden and the children were to remain at home, and Henry, in June, was to go to a German university, where Lord Archgolle had been educated, and to which, Mr. O’Carroll had taken a fancy to send him while he himself seemed glad of the change, and novelty.

Mrs. O’Carroll wrote to beg Emma Leslie to join them in this tour, but the answer to her letter, which she received from Mrs. Percie, caused her much regret; Emma was too ill to write, and of course too ill to think of joining a party of pleasure. The letter was kind and friendly,

and concluded with a hope, that the whole party would pay Marthorpe Vicarage a visit before they returned to Ireland, to which invitation Mrs. O'Carroll wrote an assent, for her husband was very anxious to be introduced to the Percies.

Some evenings after their decision, the whole party was assembled in the large drawing-room, the ladies working, and the gentlemen engaged reading. Mr. O'Carroll broke the silence by asking Manuel what regiment his friend Archgolle had entered ? Manuel answered—

“ The 73rd.”

“ Oh ! I am really glad of that,” for here are the stations of the different regiments, for this month, and the 73rd changes from Plymouth to W——.

“ I am delighted,” said Manuel, springing from his chair, with unwonted energy, “ show me the paper—are they coming to W——, or are they come ?”

"Here, my dear boy," replied his father giving him the paper, "satisfy yourself,"

During the rest of the evening Manuel spoke of nothing but Lord Archgolle, and the pleasure he should feel in meeting him.

"You will like him greatly, Henry," said Manuel.

"I am not so sure of that," replied Henry, "for all the young lords I have known, thought too much of themselves or of their titles to be agreeable acquaintances."

"Lord Archgolle," said Mr. O'Carroll, "is a very superior being, and free from all self-conceit; he is a young man, who, by an extraordinary will of his father, is a minor until he is twenty-five, unless he should marry before, and is obliged to content himself with a small annuity, though he will eventually be the possessor of many thousands annually; he was too, obliged to travel for three years—he was finishing his wanderings when we met him, and then intended

entering the army. His sisters are married, and he has no tie to bind him to home; besides he is Irish by his mother's side, and half a Papist."

"Take care of your little heart, Lotte!" said Henry, and he smiled, for well he knew that caution was unnecessary.

Manuel had thrown by the paper—Charlotte took it up, and her eye brightened as she saw that the regiment Roland was in, had changed to Edinburgh, she was going there—her father would see him—like him—and she should be so happy.

Soon after Lord Archgolle arrived with his regiment in W——, and his friends at Coomcarne, lost no time in welcoming him to Ireland. He certainly merited their warm eulogiums for he was most unaffected in his manners—very lively and agreeable, and elegant looking; he seemed at first greatly struck by Charlotte's appearance, and turning towards

Manuel, reproached him, in a low voice, for never telling him he had such a beautiful sister.

“I am very glad you admire her,” said Manuel, “and when you know more of her, I think will like her.”

A large party were assembled at Coomcarne Park to welcome the new comer, and among them Mrs. Cardon and Amelia; the latter determined, if possible, to engross Lord Archgolle's conversation; and hearing he was very musical, resolved that evening to surprise him, and gain his admiration, by a display of her musical talents.

“Charlotte,” she remarked, “had become very silent and serious,” so she hoped by her attentions, to keep Lord Archgolle to herself.

The dinner party passed off not as dinner parties often do, in silent stupidity, but very agreeably. Lord Archgolle appeared to great advantage, and Charlotte could not help observing how frequently his eyes were

bent on her, and she felt relieved when the ladies rose to retire.

“We must have music to night,” said Amelia, “for Lord Archgolle told me he was passionately fond of it,” and she tripped into the music-room, followed by Charlotte, who took up a book and sat, apparently, reading, till she was aroused by hearing Amelia play the air of the duett, Roland and Barton had so often sung, and the music of which she had copied when at Marthorpe Vicarage,

“Where did you get this song, Miss O’Carroll,” asked Amelia.

Charlotte rose and saw that Amelia had opened all her music folios.

“When I was in England,” she replied, leaving Amelia to her study of the song.

A servant entered with coffee, and presented to Charlotte two letters, one from Emma Leslie, the other—her heart palpitated—she opened it, and found it was from Roland—the first she read, and then took it to her mother; it was but a few lines, an effort from an invalid—

but it expressed much gratitude for their kind remembrance of her, and hoped to be better before they visited Marthorpe. Barton she mentioned as being engaged pursuing his studies—but Roland's name she omitted, and Charlotte smiled as she marked the omission. She must be pardoned for retiring to her dressing-room, leaving Amelia alone to practise her music; and reading and re-reading her first love letter—it was all she could desire.

What a pleasure is conveyed to the heart by a kind and affectionate letter from a loved friend; Charlotte with a light and happy heart descended to the drawing-room, and for that night at least, she was proof against Lord Archgolle's attention.

Henry noticed her additional animation, and he, really liking his friend Roland, rejoiced in the cause—he was very young and so was Charlotte, and both had their dreams for the time to come; theirs was the season of joyful anticipations — yet a sad future lay before them !

CHAPTER XV.

CHARLOTTE found, on re-entering the music-room, Amelia still at the piano. She was playing over, and humming at the same time, Roland's duet, but on the entrance of Lord Archgolle, who followed our heroine from the drawing-room, she commenced.

Charlotte was seated on the sofa and by her

sat Henry. Lord Archgolle stood near examining some prints.

“Prevail on Miss Cardon to sing, Lotte,” said Manuel advancing to Charlotte, “Lord Archgolle is very fond of singing,” she immediately rose and asked Amelia to sing, for she was free from any paltry feelings of fear that Amelia would eclipse her.

“Excuse me,” answered Miss Cardon hastily rising from the piano, and seating herself near Lord Archgolle, “I cannot sing to-night—I thought,” added she, turning to him, “your lordship said you were fond of music.”

“So I am an enthusiastic admirer of the gentle science,” replied he, continuing his observation of the prints.

Charlotte who had gone into the drawing-room returned with the two Miss Mastertons, who very obligingly sang some pretty duets. Lord Archgolle left his prints — joined the group round the piano, and seemed much pleased.

“ Now, Lotte, comes your turn,” said Manuel, who seemed bent on showing off his sister before his friend ; and she at once complied, and sang to the harp, one of Moore’s Melodies—the words of which, seem a part of the tune.

“ Do you know this little song, Miss O’Carroll,” asked Lord Archgolle, taking up Roland’s duet, when he had thanked her very gracefully for her sweet song.

“ Yes, replied Charlotte, “ Henry sings it with me,” and they sang the duet, with great feeling and taste.

When they had concluded, Lord Archgolle said—

“ This is a peculiar favorite of mine, though it is more than three years since I heard it—it was on the eve of my leaving England for my travels ; you may remember, Manuel, having often heard me speak of the *fête* I was invited to, at Dover, by the officers then quar-

tered there. We were a large, merry party, and among us were two young men of the name of Percie, one an ensign in the regiment, lately joined, who sang this song with such exquisite taste I have never forgotten it since."

"Were these young mens' names Barton and Roland Percie," asked Henry, "for we knew two of that name, at Exmouth?"

"Yes, they were," replied Lord Archgolle, "their father is vicar of some place in Devonshire, and a near cousin of mine, so take care what you say of them," added he laughing.

Charlotte thought Henry's praises sounded rather cold, but during that evening, she applied herself with great pleasure to entertain Lord Archgolle, as Roland's cousin, and not a thought of making a conquest of him entered her mind. She was Roland's in every thought—pledged to him, and she would have hated herself, if she thought she could ever cease to love him.

Unfortunately, Lord Archgolle knew not this, and each visit he made to Coomcarne Park, he felt an increasing pleasure in her society; she was always glad to see him, and he *almost* loved her for that total want of coquetry she excelled in. His attentions were marked towards her, and her father and Manuel were never weary of lauding him—both wished much for him as a husband for Charlotte.

May arrived in all its beauty, and many gay, rural parties they had, yet Charlotte did not enjoy them—she longed to have them over—that their tour might be begun, for in Scotland all her hopes lay.

June came, and Henry prepared to leave for Germany, Mr. O'Carroll intending accompanying him to London.

Charlotte deeply felt the parting with him for he was her favorite brother—her confidant—and as she listened to all his plans for the

future, on the eve of his departure, she fervently hoped he might live to realise them.

At his request, they had strolled out after dinner, to the summer house by the lake's side, and there they passed an hour or two in talking and planning. Often was Roland's name introduced, and many happy days were looked forward to.

"It is late, dearest Lotte," said Henry, "so we must return home. You will miss me often in your walks and rides, but I will write frequently and you will reply and tell me all and everything ; and when I come back I shall be so much improved—three years pass quickly—and I will study so diligently, and try to be a *great* man—a learned man."

"Take care of your health, my own, dear Henry," said Charlotte, "for indeed I do not think you are as strong as you fancy yourself."

And Henry gently chided her for saying so ;

and together they strolled home, through that beautiful Park in the silvery moonlight ; and Charlotte often, in after life, thought of her gaiety and happiness during that ramble.

The adieus were spoken next morning, and Henry was gone.

“ Good bye ” is a sad, sad word when loving ones part ; and Charlotte felt all day very lonely, but she endeavoured to cheer those around her, for all regretted Henry’s departure—he was so lovely and beloved.

In the evening, the whole of the family walked to Peter’s cottage, to enquire for the poor old man who was slowly recovering from illness ; returning home, Charlotte proposed to extend their walk homewards through the woods : Mrs. O’Carroll said she felt too fatigued to do so, but that she would return home the shortest way with Miss Malden, whilst the children very gladly joined Charlotte in taking the longest ramble.

" Oh, Lotta," said little Camilla clapping her hands, as they reached the edge of the lake, " here is the little skiff, and do let us take a nice row on the water."

" Do sister," said Mary, " and Cammie and I will pull the paddles so well—so steadily—you know Henry taught us to row."

" And we will sing the Gondoliers' Chant Roland taught us," added Cammie, " oh ! do."

Charlotte got into the little boat, and the children pulled it skilfully across the lake; at the same time singing very prettily, and Charlotte in return sang for them. They had reached the end of the lake where the avenue wound by it.

" Look Lotta," said Mary, " there is the post-man passing, shall I ask him if he has a letter for you ?"

" Do," replied she.

The man came, in answer to the call, to the

water's edge, and gave a letter for Charlotte ; it was from Roland.

"Is it from Emma Leslie?" asked Camilla.

"It is not, dear Cammie," said Charlotte, while a slight blush overspread her face.

"From whom is it then," pursued she with childish inquisitiveness.

"It is not from England," said Charlotte, and she continued reading it, while little Cammie seemed anything but pleased, that she had not been told who the writer was.

"Charlotte read, and she felt her lips grow cold, and her heart beat wildly. She had not written a reply to Roland's first letter, and he reproached her bitterly for her neglect—feared she was forgetting him, and concluded by urging her, if she, indeed, still cared for him, to write at once ; she put the letter into her reticule, she gazed on his ring — and she thought on his love, and the warmth with which he had pledged himself to be hers, and

hers only ; and then she remembered that Henry her confidant was gone—and tears started to her eyes.

“ Mary,” exclaimed Camilla, rather pettishly, “ see, you are pulling too strong—you have put us on the bank,” and the little boat stuck fast on a sandy and ridgy bank.

“ What shall we do now, sister ?” asked Mary, “ for see, the mischief I have done ?”

Charlotte rose to try and move off the boat—her thoughts were wandering—she took the paddle from Mary, and standing in the bow of the little boat, pushed with all her strength—it moved off suddenly, and the jerk threw her head foremost into the water.

“ Do not be frightened, loves — it is not deep here,” said she, to her terrified little sisters who were screaming violently, “ sit still,” and she began to wade through the water to catch the boat.

“ For God’s sake stop, Miss O’Carroll,” ex-

claimed a man's voice from the shore, which was near at this point ; but Charlotte still held the little boat fast, and as she turned, beheld Lord Archgolle advancing rapidly through the water ; she knew it deepened all round the bank she stood on, and she tremblingly called out to him to stop.

“ Fear not,” replied he, “ I am an expert swimmer,” and in a minute more he was by her side—had placed her in the boat, and then taking the only remaining paddle, commenced rowing them to the shore.

The children soon forgot their fright, and gaily ran on together before Charlotte, who, leaning on Lord Archgolle, was impelled by him to her utmost walking speed, to guard against cold after her wetting. They walked for a short time in silence.

“ Miss O'Carroll,” said Lord Archgolle, “ you must be surprised at seeing me here, at this unseasonable hour. I took an early dinner at

W——, and the evening was so fine, I could not resist riding over. I was passing along the avenue, when I noticed your little boat party—so giving my horse and a small basket of shells, I procured this morning, to a servant whom I met, I started to join you.”

“You are very kind, Lord Archgolle,” replied Charlotte, “and I assure you we shall always be glad to see you.”

“Would that *I* could believe *you* would be always so, Miss O’Carroll,” said he, “that belief, would indeed give me inexpressible pleasure. I hope you will like the shells,” added he, “I heard you last week wish for some, to complete your collection. Two of them—the caliotas spendens, my cousin Roland Percie gave me, when we were school-fellows at Eton. I had a letter from him this morning,—it seemed a cold and strange one too—I thought I had written him long accounts of you all, knowing how very intimate you had been, yet he sends no kind message,” he looked at

her blushing cheek, and a silence followed.

“You seem not in your usual spirits this evening, Miss O’Carroll,” resumed Lord Archgolle.

“I feel so lonely,” replied Charlotte, “without my dear Henry.”

“I wish, oh, how truly, dear Miss O’Carroll, there was *no one* dearer than Henry absent—forgive me if I seem forward. I have known you it is true, but two months—two happy and delightful months, yet I feel as if we were old acquaintances. May I speak freely?”

“Certainly,” answered Charlotte.

“Miss O’Carroll,” said he, “It was my father’s dying request that I should marry young; to urge me to do this, he made the extraordinary will you have heard me speak of, and I entered life determined to fulfil his wishes. I travelled for three years—I met ladies—young and beautiful, but never could find one to love—” he paused, “until I met

you—you have realised my boyish dreams of all that is estimable in woman, and you, Charlotte, I love sincerely and disinterestedly, Will not you speak—say one word to me ?”

Charlotte was mute—she hung her head, and relinquished the arm which supported her.

“ It is then, as I feared,” added he, “ I have often and often observed you, when Roland’s name has been mentioned—I have seen your pleased look when Henry praised him, and I too have seen your *almost* angry one, when Manuel has spoken *slighting*ly of him—believe me—I would give all I possess, to think you only liked him as a friend.”

“ Lord Archgolle,” said Charlotte, “ I thank you for your good opinion—I value it most truly, as—” and her promise of secrecy to Roland stopped her—“ I owe you this avowal—my affections are irrevocably fixed—engaged—where I cannot say—forget me—or rather think of me as a friend that

wishes you well in all sincerity," and she held out her hand to him, it was that on which was Roland's ring, and she thought of him—her only love.

Lord Archgolle took it kindly.

"Miss O'Carroll," said he in a faltering voice, "I will try to think of you as a friend, and warmly I wish you every happiness—had it been fated that I could have been more—how fondly would I have loved and cherished you—your wishes should have been laws, but now—"

"You must forget all this," she replied—"no one shall know of this conversation, believe me. Continue to visit us, during your stay, and we will always be good friends," added she, smiling kindly.

He pressed her hand, and with a "God bless you" mounted his horse and rode quickly away.

Charlotte had invited him to join them at tea, and to change his wet clothes, for when are

the duties of hospitality forgotten by an Irish-woman ; but his lordship felt he ought not, and for a week he abstained from visiting at Coomcarne Park, and when he came, Charlotte always found some excuse for absenting herself ; he remarked this and applauded her motives, though he regretted the cause.

CHAPTER XVI.

AT the end of the month, Mr. O'Carroll returned from London, having seen Henry on board a sailing vessel, which was to convey him to Hamburgh, whence he was to proceed to the University of Gottingen.

One of Mr. O'Carroll's first enquiries of Manuel was, if Lord Archgolle continued his attentions to Charlotte, and he felt a regret when he was told that they had met very seldom during his absence, and that Char-

lotte did not seem to like him. In truth her thoughts were solely engrossed by the prospect of soon meeting Roland.

She had written a few lines to him—she read them over and over, and after she had spoiled several sheets of paper, then finding she could write nothing that would satisfy her, determined not to send any answer to his letter, thinking what a joyful surprise it would be to him, to see her in Edinburgh.

Days passed, and July came in with fair, mild weather, the O'Carrolls left Coomcarne Park and arrived in Dublin, and Mr. O'Carroll remarked with pleasure, how much improved Charlotte's spirits were; she laughed and talked with all her former gaiety, but he was very far from divining the real cause.

From Dublin they sailed to Liverpool, and thence, after a tour round the English Lakes, proceeded to Edinburgh, intending to

remain there a week, and then proceed to visit the beautiful Scottish Lakes.

“Will you take a stroll through the town, ladies?” said Mr. O’Carroll, to his wife and daughter, the morning after their arrival in Edinburgh, as they sat loitering over a late breakfast, “It is indeed well worth seeing, and we must remember that as tourists, we are bound in conscience to see everything we can.”

“I feel quite fatigued this morning, Henry,” replied Mrs. O’Carroll, “from our very long journey yesterday, so I will rest and join you in a walk in the evening—but I am sure Lotta will go—she looks very willing.”

“Indeed I am, dear mamma,” said Charlotte, rising, “shall I go now, father, and put on my bonnet, I am very anxious to begin sight-seeing?”

“Do, love,” said her father, and away

she hastened to her toilet, pardon her dear reader if she bestowed an extra degree of care in adjusting her bonnet, it was only for the admiration of *one* she perchance might meet.

She took her father's arm, Manuel walked with them, and they gaily advanced along the streets — passed from the new to the old town, and were ascending the steps when Charlotte, looking up, saw, advancing towards her, Roland Percie, leaning on the arm of another officer.

She felt her heart beat wildly, — he advanced—he started—he looked at Charlotte, and she saw him turn deadly pale; he glanced at Manuel, then at her father, and passed on without bowing. This passed in a moment, and unnoticed both by Mr. O'Carroll and Manuel, who were busy in admiring the old castle they were approaching.

Charlotte felt her head grow dizzy and her limbs tremble. Her father, on whom she was

leaning, remarked the latter, and attributing it to fatigue, asked her if she would not like to rest.

"Very much," she replied, and her father then noticing her pale cheeks, seated her on an old seat outside the castle.

She tried to conquer her feelings, and before her father and Manuel had finished their inspection of the castle, she had succeeded, and they quietly descended towards the town.

"Here is a bookseller's shop," said Mr. O'Carroll, "I want to buy some story books, for Mary and Cammie, so you can rest yourself again, Lotta."

They entered a large and handsome bookseller's shop, and she seated herself; but had scarcely done so, when she heard the sound of a well-known voice, and advancing towards her from the end of the shop, she saw Roland.

He looked at her, and noticing her paleness, bowed, and speaking in a cold, constrained voice, hoped she was well.

She bowed her head, for she could not speak.

Was this then Roland—her own beloved Roland?—so changed. But a womanly feeling of offended pride came to her aid, and she struggled to repress the tears that were ready to burst forth.

Roland remarked her agitation, and asked in a low voice which of the gentlemen was the fortunate husband.

“My husband!” said Charlotte, a gleam of pleasure emanating from her eyes. Here then was Roland’s coldness accounted for, and that too in a way which showed how he loved her. “My dear father and my eldest brother are my companions,” added she, and Roland’s delighted look more than repaid her for the short anxiety his previous coldness had caused.

“Charlotte, dear—dear Charlotte, forgive me,—I believed you false, and now married.”

“Ah! Roland, you little know me,” sighed she, but the sigh was a happy one. “Come,” added she, advancing towards her father and brother, “I will introduce you to these formidable gentlemen.”

Mutual enquiries passed between them, and before Mr. O’Carroll had completed his purchases, Charlotte had forgiven — nay, remembered with pleasure Roland’s cold salute.

“Do you feel quite strong now, Lotta?” said her father, — “I need not ask though, for you have recovered your bloom—the walk up that steep hill was too fatiguing.”

Roland looked at her smilingly, and she saw he understood the cause of her fatigue and recovery.

“You will accompany us I hope to our hotel, Mr. Percie,” said Mr. O’Carroll,

"Mrs. O'Carroll will be very happy to see you."

"With great pleasure," replied Roland.

And together they strolled towards the hotel.

Mrs. O'Carroll received Roland with a very warm welcome, and enquired most particularly after all his family, and made him promise to join their dinner circle.

"You know now, I suppose, all the lions of the town," continued she, "so you shall be our *cicerone* this evening. Charlotte will have much to ask you about Emma Leslie."

"I shall feel great pleasure in satisfying her curiosity," answered Roland, and he sat down near Charlotte on a sofa, at the end of the room. "I had a letter yesterday from my mother," added he, "and poor dear Emma is, I fear, wearing slowly and surely away; she will not consent to a removal from Marthorpe Vicarage, to which she is much at-

tached, and I believe, no change of air can now avail her ; — here,” said he, in a low voice, “ is my mother’s letter, read it, dearest, for you are mentioned in it more than once,” and he slipped the letter into Charlotte’s hand.

She took it, thanking him with a look for this proof of his confidence.

“ Manuel,” said Mr. O’Carroll, who stood at one of the windows, “ make haste and come hither,—is not that young man with that fat lady, there, on the other side of the street, our friend, William Masterton.”

“ It is indeed, father,” replied Manuel, “ you know William came to Scotland some months since, on his uncle’s death.”

“ I dare say that lady is his aunt—see, she is dressed in deep mourning, whoever she is,” said Mr. O’Carroll, “ I will go and speak to William ; in this strange country, he will be glad to come and dine with his old Irish

friends,—you will excuse me, Mr. Percie, for half an hour ;—your old acquaintance, here, will entertain you,” and he took up his hat, and followed by Manuel, quitted the room.

“ You will think us a rude couple, I am afraid, if I leave you too,” said Mrs. O’Carroll, “ but I was writing a letter when you came, to Miss Malden, which I am anxious to have finished for the post time—you will excuse me also ? — Charlotte say everything for me, and I’ll be back in ten minutes.” She hastened away, and Roland thought an apology quite unnecessary.

“ Will you say everything for her, dear Charlotte ?” asked Roland, taking her hand, “ and a great deal more than she would say, I hope, —my own betrothed bride. Ah ! Charlotte, if you had known one half the misery you made me suffer, by not writing. You know Lord Archgolle, my cousin — why do you

blush? he often writes to me and always speaks in such praise of you, that I could not help fearing that his rank—his riches would make you forget your poor lover.”

“ You wronged me bitterly, Roland,” said she, “ if I had ceased to care for you, should I have kept this ring?” and she showed his ring.

“ That I did wrong you, Charlotte, gives me happier feelings than I have felt for months. Listen to me, in Lord Archgolle’s very last letter, he speaks of you almost as if he loved you, and he adds jocosely : ‘ I will send you some green ribbon on her wedding day ;’ little did he dream how that mere sentence affected me. Well, I tried again and again to frame some excuse for your silence, and endeavoured to persuade myself, you, so young and so fair, could not be false ; I almost hoped sickness prevented your writing, and I kept up my spirits, strange though it may

seem, for a whole week, and then in an Irish paper, I read your name among the fashionable arrivals in Dublin—and you were enjoying yourself and had forgotten me. In this state of mind I met you this morning—married, as I thought, and can you blame my coldness—my formality.

“Roland,” said Charlotte, “I began several letters to you, but did not think them worth sending—you know now I did not forget you, it was only too much I thought of you,” and tears started to her eyes.

“Charlotte, dearest girl, I believe you, I would lose my life rather than doubt you. Tell me one thing; did Lord Archgolle ever propose for you—did he hint even that he loved you?”

“Roland,” replied Charlotte, trembling a little, “you have no right to question me thus.”

“No right,” exclaimed he vehemently, “to

question you—you that are engaged to me—you who say you love me. Pshaw—love me—what is love without confidence?" and he rose and walked about the room, whilst Charlotte remained mute and pale as a statue; at length he stopped before her, and said in a broken voice, "Charlotte, I love you as woman was never loved, deeply and truly."

She sobbed and told him all; but concluded by assuring him that no person had known it.

"And why did you refuse him, Charlotte?" asked Roland in a pleased tone.

"You need not ask that question at any rate," replied she smiling, as the door opened, and her father entered with Manuel and young William Masterton, whom she felt really glad to see—far away from home we gladly welcome the face we have seen beaming by our "ain fire-side," and William too was a friend of Henry's, and he was brother to Alicia Masterton, and all these added to the warmth of her,

“How do you do—I am very glad to see you.”

He remained to dine, and after dinner, all the party walked out to visit Holyrood Palace.

CHAPTER XVII.

How many solemn thoughts does a visit to a ruined castle, or an ancient dwelling-place, conjure up. The past comes before us as we tread the scenes of former splendour, and the gaiety of those who adorned these scenes, their enjoyment, and too often their sufferings, stand before us in the vividness of reality ; and they have all gone from earth, and generations after them are swept away, and we pause and think that our turn too will come—that we, now happy and full of health, must follow

them to that "bourne whence no traveller returns," our names forgotten, and others filling our places ; and they in their turn yielding to the all-wise decrees of Providence, will leave this fair earth for a fairer and a better land, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Holyrood Palace brings painful thoughts to the mind of the thinking visiter ; for who can forget the ill used, the beautiful Mary Stuart—her wrongs—her woes—and her death.

Our party had surveyed every apartment of this antique pile, and had paused a long time in that chamber which is shown as the fatal scene of David Rizzio's murder. They reached the court on their return. Mr. and Mrs. O'Carroll, and William Masterton were a short way in advance, Charlotte following with Manuel and Roland.

"Oh, I fear I have lost my reticule," said Charlotte, "and I had a letter in it I should not wish to lose;" she looked at Roland as she spoke—it was his mother's letter.

"We had better seek it then," said Roland ; and they returned. In the gallery they stopped.

"Cannot you remember where you left it?" asked Manuel.

"I think it probable I dropped it in Rizzio's chamber where we remained so long," answered she.

"Stay, then," said Manuel, "wait for me, and I will run and seek it;" he hastened away and the lovers were alone.

"Charlotte," said Roland, in a low, hesitating voice, "take my arm, and let us walk slowly before your brother, I have much to say."

"It is better to remain here for him," replied she, "and this is a delightful place for conversation, we can walk up and down this gallery, and admire all those beauties," and she pointed to the pictures which adorned the walls.

“It is not of them, Charlotte, I would have you now think,” said Roland; “but of me, and of my feelings. After our conversation this morning I need not again tell you how I love you—how entirely and devotedly I am yours. You remember our engagement—the promise you entered into that happy day last winter, at the ruins of Delsarne Abbey;—then I asked you to continue your love to me in secret for one year, and that then I would claim your hand, as a captain. Since then I have felt the misery of the delay;—I have known the anguish of believing you could love another, and I will not part again from you, without claiming your promised hand. Charlotte,” added he, with increased vehemence, “there is but *one* way of proving you love me—by becoming mine irrevocably.”

“My father would not consent to our union yet,” said Charlotte, sorrowfully; “you are but a lieutenant——”

“And can my poverty”—interrupted Ro-

land, bitterly—"make a change in your sentiments?"

"None in mine, Roland," answered she;—"but think you, would *one* that forgot she was a daughter be a good wife? We are both young—let us have patience."

"Patience!" exclaimed Roland, hastily; "you may have it, but I can have none. I lead a roving life, and am not master of my time. When may we meet again?—my regiment may be ordered on foreign service—I think it very likely—and if it be, I shall go, and perhaps fall a victim to the climate, for I am not very healthy."

"Oh, say not so, dear Roland," said Charlotte, mournfully; "what can I do?—you would not have me grieve the best, the very, *very* best of parents by marrying without their consent. Ask my father—my dear father; he is kind and indulgent—tell him of our love—he may give consent after a time; and then—" she paused.

“What then?” asked Roland; but Charlotte did not answer. “Listen to me, Charlotte,” added he. “I have sworn to be yours. Now if you will not be mine I swear, solemnly swear, to exchange into the first regiment ordered on foreign service, and there to end my miserable life. Though my parents would grieve for my loss,—for *they* love me truly,—*you would* soon be reconciled, and some wealthy and prosperous suitor would quickly make you forget your *poor* though devoted one.”

“You are cruel—unkind—unjust, Roland,” sobbed Charlotte—“you know how I love you.”

“Then be mine, dearest Charlotte,” said Roland; “and believe me, once mine, your parents will never blame your choice. If your father be the kind indulgent parent you say, he will willingly forgive you, and then we shall be so happy. We can live comfortably enough on small means; and *my* dear father

and mother, how rejoiced they will be to welcome their new daughter to Marthorpe; and then we will go to your beautiful Ireland; and when you have me with you will you regret having refused Lord Archgolle, or any of your other admirers—for I dare say you have hosts of them,” added he, laughing.

“Roland,” sighed Charlotte, “you do not reflect on what you urge me to do.”

“But I have reflected,” answered he, gaily, “and I will reflect all to-night, and to-morrow you shall hear of my cogitations,” whispered he—for Manuel approached with the lost bag.

“You were right, Lotta,” said Manuel,—“you left the bag in Queen Mary’s room, but it was locked, and I had a long search to make before I found the key-keeper. Here it is, and I have not ventured to pry into it.”

“Thank you, my dear Manuel,” replied Charlotte, taking the bag, as they hastened to overtake their party.

“How long do you remain in Edinburgh?” asked William Masterton of Charlotte, as they sat at tea that night.

“A week—is it not, Father?” said Charlotte.

“Only a week,” said William Masterton ;—
“I am very sorry for that, for on the 18th of next month there is to be a grand fancy ball given here, for charity too—and indeed it will be worth seeing ; each chief of the clans will wear their own tartan ; it will be a pretty and novel sight to you, Miss O’Carroll,—induce your father to prolong his stay.”

“Her father will be most willing to gratify her, William,” replied Mr. O’Carroll—“what say you, Lotta ;—would you like to see this ball ?”

“Certainly,” answered Charlotte, and she thought more of the pleasure of Roland’s company than of the ball.

“Well, then,” said Mr. O’Carroll, “as we only came for pleasure let us remain here until

this ball is over. We have a good deal to see in this neighbourhood;—there is Melrose Abbey, and Dryburgh Abbey—and—and—can you assist me, Mr. Percie?” asked he, “I forget any other lions.”

“Roslin Castle is worth a visit,” said Roland.

“Or, Henry,” said Mrs. O’Carroll, “what would you think of visiting the lakes, during this interim, and returning hither some days before this ball? You know the little ones at home will be anxious for our return; and we have the promised visit to pay to Marthorpe Vicarage—one that will give me great pleasure; and to conclude,” continued she, smiling, “I promised Mary to be at Coomcarne for her birthday, the 2nd of September.”

“What a blessing it is to have a wife,” said Mr. O’Carroll, gaily, taking her hand. “Young gentleman, I would advise you all to marry as quickly as possible—marry young as I did.

What a sensible pair we were, Camilla, when Manuel was born ! Do you remember I wanted to take him in my arms out riding, when he was only a week old ? But we soon grew together a steady pair."

"Yes, father," said Manuel, "but all young marriages may not turn out so fortunate as yours did. The old proverb says—'marry in haste, and repent at leisure ;' " and he glanced at Roland ; whilst Charlotte turned pale and red by turns.

"Here is a digression from tours to matrimony and happiness," exclaimed Mr. O'Carroll, "the real point in debate before us Mrs. O'Carroll has decided—we must set off on our visit to the lakes to-morrow ;—no not to-morrow, it will be Sunday ; but on Monday. Well, we will enjoy ourselves, and admire them as much as we can ; and we return here some days before this ball, that we may get fancy dresses, and all the paraphernalia that ladies take such

a time to get in order. Mr. Percie and William, we shall be very happy if you will join our party."

The former declined, saying, "he had business in Edinburgh that would occupy him for the next fortnight."

How little the father thought what that business was, and the latter very joyfully accepted the invitation. They wished good night, and Roland whispered to Charlotte, "I will see you to-morrow—remember you have your mind made up."

And did she sleep well that night! she lay for hours awake, tossing on a restless pillow, now determining to give Roland up, and wavering between love for him, and duty to her parents. She dozed, and dreamed a frightful dream; she thought she was standing on the beach, at Coomcarne Park, watching a vessel which was slowly approaching the shore; it anchored near, and a boat put off from it, and landed near where she was standing; it

was rowed by four blacks, and she felt a horror creeping over her. When they advanced towards her, and raising her from the ground, placed her in the boat, and pulled off quickly to the ship. She tried to scream—she struggled—but in vain; she felt unable to move—unable to articulate. They reached the ship; she was taken on board, and left motionless on the deck. She heard a mournful sound from below, as if of wailing. She listened—the sound approached, and two figures, clothed in long, black robes approached her; they wore long veils which hid their faces; one took her hand, while the other continued a passionate lament, and said in a hollow voice, “Follow me, I will show you your work.” Charlotte followed—they descended a ladder, and entered a room all hung with black, lighted by lamps, which cast a blueish light around. Strange figures stood all round the room, and on Charlotte’s appearance, all joined in a long, loud wail. Her

conductors stopped before a couch, which was in the centre of the room, covered with black ; they raised the covering, and Charlotte saw, lying dead, Roland Percie. His eyes were half opened, and he appeared shrunk and sallow ; his hair was cut close, and he seemed a ghastly sight. The veiled figures raised their veils, and disclosed the pale and worn faces of Mr. and Mrs. Percie. They rushed towards Charlotte, and seized her, exclaiming, " It is your work—your work—you made him leave his country, his home, his friends, and see how he returns." And they caught her in their arms, hastened with her on deck, and flung her overboard, saying, " So do we punish your faithlessness." Charlotte screamed—she bounded up, and awaking, found herself on the floor, by her bedside ; for some minutes she was bewildered, but she regained her composure. The morning was breaking with a faint, dull, grey hue, and Charlotte dressed herself, for she determined not to seek

repose again where she had had such frightful dreams. Yet she was not happy, even though we know it is a blissful feeling to awake to the reality that our horrid sleeping thoughts and fancies are unreal. There is no happiness in this life apart from the consciousness of acting rightly. The pleasures of this world may taste sweetly, and enjoyment *seem* ours; but while a kindly feeling remain in the heart, the sting of conscience will embitter life that has strayed from the path of righteousness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"YOU seem pale, Lotta," said her mother, affectionately to her, when she appeared at the breakfast table.

"A cheerful walk after prayers will restore the bloom to her cheeks," said her father; "I asked the young men to come here at three o'clock, and join us in a ramble, and then dine. Now Camilla," added he, merrily, "see, Lotta has recovered her complexion—the mention of the walk even does her good."

"Or the mention of our escorts," said

Manuel, pointedly, for he had observed Roland's attention, and feared in him a rival to his friend, Lord Archgolle.

Charlotte laughed—an unnatural forced laugh it was, and seemed very hungry, so eagerly did she commence her breakfast.

Three o'clock came, and brought the young men punctually, and after luncheon they all walked together towards Salisbury Craig, and if Roland had hoped for a few private words with Charlotte he was disappointed, for Manuel kept close by her side, and this annoyed her too, for she wished to argue again with Roland, to show him how foolish, how blameable she thought his wishes. Something of her thoughts he divined, for on separating to change their dresses for dinner, he whispered, "When all are in their rooms, Charlotte, return here for *one* minute if you love me;" and she granted his request. They had all retired to dress, and Charlotte, trembling, descended; she found Roland greatly agitated.

"God bless you, my love," said he, tenderly, "I will not detain you *one* minute—remember *all* I said yesterday—remember I swear to its truth to-day, and now say, will you be mine? Or here we part for ever and *ever*. By to-morrow's coach, I will start for London—go abroad."

Charlotte shuddered, her dream was before her.

"Say one word, Charlotte—one word—either yes or no? and what a change will the simple monosyllable make." Where was Charlotte's resolution! where those arguments she had wished to urge. All vanished, all forgotten—as, sobbing, she murmured the fatal "Yes!" Roland folded her in his arms—his first embrace—and, with a "God bless and reward you," quitted the room, and Charlotte noiselessly gained her chamber, and there gave way to floods of tears. But her toilette had to be made, and all emotion conquered. She dressed herself, bathed her eyes, and appeared in the sitting room, apparently the same girl, yet feeling, oh! how differently. Her abstraction during the even-

ing, was noticed by her parents, and often by Manuel. They were to leave early next day, for St. Andrew's, by water, for Mrs. O'Carroll loved the sea, and Roland gracefully wished them a very pleasant journey. Pressing Charlotte's hand, he slipped a piece of paper into it! on it was scribbled, hastily, a few lines, saying, "he would have every preparation made for their marriage, on her return—licenses obtained, and witnesses ready, and fear not," he added, "happiness will be ours, though our lot will be an humble one. Enjoy yourself during your trip, but think sometimes of *one* who will count the hours until you return." Charlotte read and re-read the lines, until her sight ached, and she fell asleep on her chair; she awoke with a start, hastened to bed, but sleep had fled, and gladly she hailed the morning's dawn. The tour was commenced, and Charlotte tried to seem gay, but a caress from her father made her heart beat, and often and often she longed

to speak—to tell him all, but her promise to Roland withheld her. From St. Andrew's the tourists proceeded to Dundee, and thence to Perth; yet the beautiful scenery of the Tay with its lovely lake, seemed to Charlotte, not beautiful. The gentlemen ascended Ben Lawers, the third highest mountain, in Britian, and Charlotte thought there was a time when she would have gladly scrambled up mountains, and enjoyed the very difficulty; but now the most romantic scenes amid which she was—and singularly wild and magnificent they are—charmed her not. With the aid of guides and good ponies, the ladies visited the celebrated waterfalls, of Aberfeldie, Acharn, and Bruan, and the Lochs of Tummel, Bannoch, and Ericht; the last the scene of so many of Prince Charlie's sufferings, after the battle of Culloden, and the very wildest district in Scotland. They returned to Perth, and thence proceeded to Stirling, visiting the lakes of Ard and Menteith, passing two

days on Loch Lomond, and a day on the exquisite Loch Katrine, and here Charlotte felt her taste for the beauties of nature conquer her former indifference; admiring this lovely lake, and the wild sublimity of the Trosachs, filled her mind with awe.

Three days before the ball they returned to Edinburgh. By Mr. O'Carroll's wish, Mrs. O'Carroll consented to accompany them to the ball, and beautiful she looked in her still deep mourning dress. Charlotte wore a black satin, and Manuel alone went in a fancy dress, it was that of a Spanish Grandee, and it very well became his Spanish look. The scene was a gay and very brilliant one, and Charlotte excited universal admiration; her father introduced her to an interesting youth about fifteen, who was dressed in complete Scotch costume; he was a Marques' son, his name Lord Adrien Wilson; he had been a college acquaintance of Henry's, and he seemed a gay-hearted creature, and very amus-

ing. Charlotte was listening with pleased attention, to an account of some boyish scrape of his and Henry's, when Roland advanced towards her, and wishing her good night, said in a whisper, "We part for a few hours—you will find a note from me, on your table, when you return; it contains every direction—God bless you." He left the room.

"Are you ill, Miss O'Carroll?" asked her young companion, seeing her blanched cheeks; "Come into the outward room—it is cool there;" Charlotte took his arm, and mechanically followed him: "Take a little wine and water," said he, presenting a glass. She took some.

"I am better now," said she, with an effort, after some minute's silence; "We had better join my father and mother," and she exerted herself to appear gay, till the ball was over. Charlotte sprung from the carriage—ran up stairs, and threw herself on her bed, and gave way to tears.

"I did not bid Lotta, good-night," said her father to his wife, when they reached their own room; "I must go and say it to her now, and tell her to take a long refreshing sleep."

"Do not disturb her Henry," said Mrs. O'Carroll, "I saw her hastening to her room, and she seemed dreadfully pale and fatigued—she did not appear to enjoy the ball much—I trust she will be quite well and gay though to-morrow." They retired to rest, nor dreamed that their child was forsaking them.

And Charlotte, how did she feel? Four o'clock chimed, and found her still in her ball dress; the day dawning through the half closed window, and her candle burning dimly with a long unsnuffed wick—in her hand was Roland's note—she read it ever and anon, and clasping her hands, started from her sitting posture, saying in a low voice.—"It is too late to recede—and he loves me so well. I must go—I must go;" her ball dress was

laid aside, and in its place she put on a simple morning robe—a second mourning one it was—she had no other—she put on her bonnet, trimmed with black—and in that dress, who would have thought *she* was going to be a bride? Her clothes she carefully packed up, and taking her keys, and her purse—a well stored one it was by a fond father—quitted the room with a stealthy step—paused at her parents' room door—not a sound proceeded from it, and with a heavy sigh she quietly descended to the hall.

A very respectable woman advanced towards her saying: “Madam, Mr. Percie, desires me give you this,” and she handed a small piece of paper, on which was written—“This is the person I mentioned to you—she is wife to the sergeant of the regiment. Come with her to the end of the street—I will meet you there.”

Five o'clock tolled, as Charlotte passed the hall-door; a sleepy looking housemaid was

washing the steps outside, to her Charlotte gave some money, and walked quickly on with her attendant. At a short distance Roland came up, and taking Charlotte's arm, he led her trembling along, with many a whispered word of encouragement; at the end of the street, a carriage awaited them.

"We will drive first to the church, dearest," said Roland, as he handed her in, and made the sergeant's wife get in after her; the door was shut, and away they drove—And what were the young girl's thoughts during that short drive? She felt confused—bewildered—the carriage stopped—the steps were let down, and Roland carefully assisted his trembling bride into the church; here an officer awaited them, and they proceeded to the altar, and were married according to the rites of the Church of England, with every necessary form.

"You are now mine! for ever mine!" whispered Roland, as he fondly kissed the

blushing cheek of his bride; and proudly he led her to the carriage. "We will now go to your clergyman's house, for I shall show how anxious I have been to have you mine by every law."

Charlotte no longer hesitated.

"I have secured two witnesses of your own religion, dearest," said he, "they await us at the clergyman's house; you cannot imagine the trouble I had to procure this license; fortunately some of my acquaintances here were Catholics, and two of them used their influence with this old priest, and showed the necessity of his giving it, and at last he complied, and here we are now arrived."

They stopped at the door of a modest mansion, in a narrow street, in the old town, and entered the house, which bore evident marks of the poverty of its owner; they were shown into a parlour badly furnished, and here they had to remain nearly half an hour, in anxious expectation of the clergyman's

arrival; he came in, an elderly man, with a saintly look, and apologized for having detained them, by saying, "he had been at a sick call, attending a death-bed."

The witnesses came in—and the ceremony was over in a few minutes—that ceremony that is so lasting and so quickly completed.—The solemn tone of the old priest affected Charlotte, and she wept freely.

"My child," said the clergyman, laying his hand on Charlotte's head, when the ceremony was over, and before she had risen from her knees, "you are young to marry without a parent's or a guardian's protection. God bless you. Remember the command: 'Honour thy father, and thy mother, that thou mayst be long lived in the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee;' and if you have erred, seek their forgiveness, and may you be happy."

"And now, Mrs. Percie," said Roland, gaily kissing her, when they were in the carriage, "we will away to our cottage. Do you re-

member the pretty one you admired near Arthur's seat, one day that we walked to Salisbury Craig, I have taken that cottage for a month, and we shall be so happy!"

Charlotte smiled brightly on her young husband.

CHAPTER XIX.

"You have eaten nothing, my own dear wife," said Roland to Charlotte, observing her untouched breakfast, as they sat at a table in the cottage he had hired; "but you shall make up for it at dinner, when I return with your parent's blessing. How will you bear my absence for a whole hour?" added he laughing.

"The hope of your return with good news, dear Roland," said she smiling, "will cheer

my solitude; here is my note to my dear father and mother—they cannot refuse to forgive their child—they know ere this of my change of name, by your note to my father. Look how well Charlotte Percie looks,” added she, holding up her first signature of her new name to her husband.

“She does indeed, dear love,” said Roland, gazing fondly on his beautiful wife’s face, “now, good bye, for a short time,” and he embraced her, and was gone.

Charlotte amused herself for sometime in putting the little sitting room in order; two French windows were in it opening on a pretty flower garden, gay with the beautiful and varied flowers of autumn, and Charlotte filled several vases with them; there was a piano which her husband had hired for her use, and some new music, and a variety of books, and she arranged all with that taste that a woman alone possesses. “Dearest Roland will scarcely know this room when he comes back,”

thought she, "and dear mamma, and my father, and Manuel, how they will admire it," and she sighed gently.

An hour passed—two slowly wore away, and no Roland appeared—Charlotte sat down to the piano, resolved not to expect him for another hour—that too passed—five o'clock struck.—"I will walk to meet him," said she, and she put on her bonnet for the purpose, but she remembered her situation as a bride, and she laid it by—"yet no one would know me to be such," sighed she, and she glanced at her mourning dress—however I will buy another dress to-morrow, and she felt her well filled purse, and a tear started to her eyes, remembering him who bestowed it. "I will read," said Charlotte, striving to banish the uneasiness that she felt creeping over her, and she drew a table to the window, which commanded a view of the little avenue, and took up a book—she read some pages—the book dropped on the table—she nodded—her arms fell down—

wards, rested on the table, and her head soon sought their resting-place, and soundly she slept—a dreamless sleep.—Romance will say impossible—a girl in her situation to sleep—yet true it was—for nights her rest had been broken—the previous one she had passed without any rest, and expectation too is a wearisome feeling. When she started from her uneasy posture—she stood up bewildered; a chill breeze came through the open window, and the evening twilight was deepening into night. She rubbed her eyes—and when her recollection returned, she gave vent freely to her tears. Half an hour of agonizing suspense passed—she heard an approaching footstep—she rushed to the door, and Roland entered alone—and pale as death.

“Charlotte,” said he, catching her in his arms, “you have now only *me* to love—every effort of mine to induce your father to see me was unavailing, I tried your mother—your brother—I sent the officer who witnessed our

marriage—I called on Mr. Masterton, and sent him with a message, asking for a few minutes' conversation—but in vain—they were inexorable, and I watched them until they left."

"And are they gone?" exclaimed Charlotte, "left me without one kind word, one line of forgiveness," and she wept bitterly.

"Not without a line, dearest," said Roland, "though certainly not one of forgiveness—here is what your father sent me before his departure, by Mr. Masterton."

She took the letter from her husband's hand, pressed the well-known writing to her lips, and read between her sobs as follows :—

"Sir,

"Your note of this morning gave me the deepest grief I ever have known—you have taken my child—the most beloved of my

children—and a parent's heart alone can feel what a bitter wound a child's fault can give, you talk of forgiveness—is it a parent's duty to forgive the ungrateful conduct of a child? Your *wife's first* fault towards her parents is a grievous one, and one they *never*—never can forget or forgive in this life—from you she deserves love and kindness—you urged—you made *her* forget the respect she owed her father's sanction, or her mother's blessing on her marriage, let the punishment due to her fault come not from you—make her life as happy as it can be—remember all further apologies are unavailing.—The enclosed draught on my London banker for £5000, was bequeathed to your *wife* by her grandfather, to be paid on the day of her marriage. From me, she never will get any fortune.

HENRY O'CARROLL."

"And they are gone Roland," sobbed Charlotte, in an agony of grief, "and they have left

their ungrateful child ! Oh, why did I forget the duty I owed my kind, and loving, and devoted parents," and sobs choked her utterance.

The first three days of the honey-moon were mostly spent by Charlotte in bitter lamentation, and by her husband in gentle soothings, but before the week was over, she found sweet consolation in his attentions, and buoyed up by his hopes for the future, she almost gained her usual cheerfulness—yet there were times when the wrong she had done, would call forth her tears, but an affectionate caress from her husband would dry them up, and replace them with smiles.—By his desire she wrote to her parents—the letter was returned unopened—she wrote to Mrs. Percie, and to Emma Leslie, and to her own dear Henry, telling him of the rash step she had taken, but blaming herself entirely, and warmly praising Roland.

"To-morrow," said Roland, when they had

been just a month married, "our time of this little cottage is out, and as I have still two months leave of absence, where shall we roam to? We are now comparatively rich—thanks to your grandfather's generosity—and though *my parents* (he laid a particular stress on the words,) have been most kind about this marriage, you know they have not invited us to Marthorpe Vicarage until Christmas, whither shall we go now?"

"You know I have sworn to obey you, dearest Roland," replied she, pointing to her wedding ring.

"Well—it shall be a pleasant sort of obedience, my little wife," said he. "Suppose we were to go the tour of the Scottish lakes, and you can show me all the points of view William Masterton admired;—in truth I am sadly tired of doing nothing in this quiet cottage."

"Doing nothing," thought Charlotte; and she felt a rising sigh—she checked it, and

then added: "Indeed, Roland, I should be delighted to see them with you; but I fear I shall make a bad guide, for I was thinking too much of *you* when I visited them. Now I shall admire them so, this lovely autumnal season—and you know,

'How the best charms of nature improve
When we see them reflected from looks that we love.'"

The next day, before their departure, a messenger arrived from the barracks, saying, "a person had been enquiring for Roland—this was Charlotte's maid, Ellen Connor, who at her own request had come to live with her young mistress." She brought with her, from Coomcarne Park, every thing that belonged to Charlotte, even her collection of shells had not been forgotten, and she wept when she thought she had quitted that happy home for ever!

The tourists commenced their excursion next day. They loitered away two months

and then returned to Edinburgh barracks, and Charlotte felt, despite her best efforts to disbelieve it, that Emma Leslie was right, when she said Roland was unsteady; yet he was still a kind husband, especially when any little excitement or amusement cheered him—and Charlotte lived only to please him.

They were much visited on their joining the regiment, and entertained at several parties, and she thought she could be completely happy if her parents forgave her imprudent elopement.

CHAPTER XX.

A death bed is a scene that, once witnessed, cannot easily be forgotten. To see an aged person quietly sink into the tomb without a pang of regret, makes one feel death far less than to see a young person droop away in the prime of life, carrying to the grave the fond hopes of many a friend. The death-bed of Emma Leslie was a beautiful scene, yet a sad one. She had called her friends around her and bade them good-bye in cheerful tones,

though the voice was faint, almost to hollowness.

Barton was in London, but her aunt and uncle and her brother were there, kneeling by the bed of one they fondly loved.

"Aunt,—dearest, kindest aunt," murmured Emma, "weep not so—you distress, you grieve me—you know I cannot be happy on earth; it is a kind Providence that takes me where 'sorrow is unknown;' why then give way to such regrets?"—She paused almost exhausted. "Uncle," resumed she, "I charge you with my love, my warmest love, to Roland and Charlotte; and tell him," whispered she, "to love his young wife well—not to neglect her. Richard, my dear young boy, give me your hand.—How cold it is—don't weep. I've a strange fancy.—Tell me, are the leaves all off *my* beech tree?—look, and tell me truly."

And he sobbed an assent.

"I watched that tree in the early spring," said Emma, in a strong voice; "I saw it beau-

tiful in its green leaves, and I saw it still beautiful in its varied leaves ;—they fell off—and the tree is bare again ; and when it buds forth anew—where shall I be ? Richard, God bless you—you were ever a fond brother to me ; and if it be permitted the souls in the other world to watch over those they loved in this, I will guard thee.—God bless you all.”

Her utterance became thick, and she sank on her pillow, and that night—a calm and fair moonlight night it was—she sank to sleep, and awoke in that “better land” she had sighed for. Charlotte heard of her death with real sorrow, and she thought of her patience under her sufferings, and tears would start to her eyes to think how much one so amiable had been punished ; “and I,” she would think, “who quitted my parents’ side without a blessing or a kind wish from them, here I am left on earth in happiness.”

“You are greatly changed since your marriage, Charlotte,” said Roland to her, one

morning that he came in and found her in tears—"you are often crying and moping; I wish you would conquer yourself. Last year, when I knew you first, you were the gayest of the gay—an agreeable companion;—you are really grown pale and thin. Come, a walk will do you good;" and he took his wife's arm and they sauntered towards the cottage, where their honey-moon had been spent.

"Would you be again, Charlotte, as you were before you saw that cottage?" asked Roland.

"Not while I have you to love me, dearest Roland," replied she.

"I must always do that, Lotta," said he.

She sighed. Did she fear his steadiness?—Time showed if she had reason to do so.

The Christmas came, and Roland got permission from his commanding officer,—who was a kind-hearted old man,—to pass a month at his home, and Charlotte very delightedly

looked forward to going there. From Henry she had a long and affectionate letter, hoping a short time would reconcile their parents to her match; he was prosecuting his studies, he said, with great ardour, and hoped to have several prizes to bring her on his return; and Charlotte with delight took the letter to Roland, and showed it to him.

"Charlotte," said he, somewhat sternly, "you can write to Henry if you please, but I forbid you to write again to any other member of your family; they have used me ill."

"Will not you let me try *one* more letter, to my father, this Christmas, dearest Roland?" asked Charlotte, in a gentle, winning voice.

"Do you forget that you have promised to *obey* me Mrs. Percie; it is a wife's business, I think, not to expostulate," and he looked quite angry.

"Indeed, dearest Roland," replied Char-

lotte, "and sweetly I will obey you; and I do believe," added she, sighing, "another letter would have no good effect, for my father is firm and decided, though even indulgent."

"If *one* more line from you," exclaimed Roland, passionately, "were to give you his entire forgiveness, you should not write it, at least not with *my* consent; and now do not look so provokingly meek, but go and pack up for to-morrow's journey, and show *my* parents, by your cheerfulness, that you feel their kindness."

Charlotte left the room unhesitatingly, and strove during their journey to Marthorpe, to be lively and gay, to please that husband she loved so devotedly, and a kind word or a caress from him, repaid all her exertions.

It was a cold, wet evening when they reached their destination, and though her new re-

lations received her very kindly, she missed her own dear familiar faces. Emma, too, was gone, and what a change a year will sometimes make, in a family circle. There seemed a gloom over the house, Mr. Percie even appeared sad—Barton was really so, and Roland alone was gay.

“You will find us dull, this Christmas, my dear Charlotte,” said her mother-in-law, kindly taking her hand, and seating herself near her when they had left the dinner table. “We all felt our dear Emma’s death so much—poor Barton has not yet recovered it.”

“I cannot find Roland’s home dull, my dear Mrs. Percie,” said Charlotte; “Indeed, I feel more than I can express; how kind you and Mr. Percie have been to me.”

“Had we not even known you, Charlotte,” replied Mrs. Percie, “we should welcome our dear boy’s wife, and I hope we shall often have you with us.”

On the gentlemen's entering, Roland seated himself near his wife, and talked gaily to her for some time.

"Have you been thinking of last year, my love," asked he, "of our love scenes, and our little coldnesses? We must ride some day to the Abbey, the fatal scene of our engagement. Do you yet regret it?"

"You very well know I do not, my dearest Roland," said Charlotte.

"Oh, here comes my reverend father!" exclaimed Roland, "looking as grave as a church dignitary ought," and Mr. Percie approached.

"Will you forgive me, Roland, for disturbing your pleasant tête-à-tête?" said he; "I must take off your wife for a few minutes. Come, Charlotte, follow me!" and he led the way into the inside room, and shut the door. "Sit down here, my dear child, near the fire," said he, kindly: "I want to have a little chat with you," and he drew two chairs near

the fire side. " You must remember now, I am Roland's father, Charlotte, and very anxious for your happiness ; it is of your marriage I would speak : I little thought last year his boyish flirtations would end as it has done. You were too well brought up not to understand fully, the duty of a child to a parent ; the love, respect and obedience, owed from one to the other—you are young, it is true—but old enough to distinguish right from wrong—the actions of passion from those of principle. In your church, matrimony is considered a solemn and holy sacrament ; in ours a ceremony, but a religious one—not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand unadvisedly or lightly. You married privately—and I do not blame you so much as I do Roland, he urged you to it—you should not have consented, certainly. We may seem, by our asking you both here, to excuse your conduct, to think it blameless, we do neither Charlotte ; but kindness will often have

more effect than severity. I see, my child," added he, kindly, observing Charlotte's tears, "that you feel you have done wrong—that you regret it."

"Indeed! indeed! I do, most truly," sobbed Charlotte: "You cannot know what indulgent parents mine were; they never refused me any gratification, and this remembrance adds to my sorrow, for having offended them. Do not blame my dear husband, though, for our rash marriage. I should have refused—I should have—I was in fault—I was——"

"You are an attached wife," said Mr. Percie, smiling: "Your fault, however great it was, does not lessen Roland's. You did not propose for him, my dear Charlotte?" she smiled. "Oh, you were both very, very culpable," continued he, "and your good father, and your gentle mother, how they must feel it. I seek not necessarily to wound your heart, but it is necessary to do more

than regret a fault. Did you write to them?"

"Yes," replied she, "I wrote on the morning of our marriage; and again when they had returned home—I mean to Coomcarne Park. A long and penitential letter, and it was returned unopened."

"You will write, my child, to-morrow, another letter—which I shall dictate—You owe them too much to hesitate making every reparation in your power."

Charlotte blushed; she stammered out something about being unable to do so.

"Why not, Charlotte?" asked Mr. Percie, in a serious tone: "Do you think any effort too great for those parents that loved you so well—whom you have so cruelly treated?"

"Roland," said she, in a low, mournful voice, "thinks I ought not to write again to them."

"Roland! my son!" exclaimed Mr. Percie,

“he forgets—He mistakes, surely; he was ever a dutiful son. Come, Charlotte, dry those tears, and send your husband in to me;” she rose and sought Roland, saying:—

“Mr. Percie wishes you to go to him, Roland,” then she seated herself, and began examining a book of prints; she looked up—she was alone in the room—throwing aside the book, and pressing her hands against her throbbing temples, endeavored to suppress her tears.

In a few moments Mr. Percie entered, smiling, and taking Charlotte’s hands in his, said, “Roland says you must do as I please; go, to-morrow afternoon you will be ready and willing to write; and now I must say, good night, for I have my sermon to prepare. God bless and guard you Charlotte.”

She thanked him gracefully, and then went into the inner room to her husband. He was

seated by the fire ; she brought a stool and sat down near him, and, looking up smilingly in his face, said :

“Dear, dear Roland, I am so much obliged to you for this permission to write again to my parents, and your good father is to dictate my letter. What is the matter, Roland, are you ill?” and she took his hand, for he looked much agitated: he drew it away hastily.

“I have to thank you, madam,” said he, angrily, “for my father’s first reproof. You indeed excuse yourself by saying *I* would not allow you, to write again to your parents ! You may write once a day for what I care ! they will be sure to forgive you, if you represent yourself to them, as an injured wife, if you try to convince them, as you have my father—that *I alone* was to blame.”

“Roland,” replied she, mournfully, “I said not so ! I did not try to appear less culpable than I felt I was—your father can tell you that.”

"My father shall tell me nothing on the subject!" interrupted he, "for I will not ask him. It was in this very room, last year, I was first a fool—there, near that cabinet, I told you, I loved you; believe me, were I to do it again, I should act more wisely: I should not now have a wife to reprove me—to point out my faults to my father. What an idiot I was to marry!"

"Oh, Roland, Roland!" said Charlotte, falling on her knees! "do not say those cruel words, or my heart will break," and she wept bitterly. "I have only you to love, you to trust, you—you will not forsake your poor, young wife: if I have offended you, I ask your forgiveness: Oh, for you I would do any thing! I do not care what others think of me, so as you love me. You know I would not willingly offend you.—Tell me what to do, and I will do it. Won't you, Roland?"

"Charlotte, get up!" said he, much agitated,

“and leave me, now; it is late—and after your journey, you had better retire to rest.” He kissed her coldly, and poor Charlotte went to her room, there freely to give vent to her tears.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHRISTMAS morning was ushered in with very inclement weather; the wind howled fearfully, and frequent hail showers made the cold, out of doors, extreme. Charlotte had just finished her morning orisons in her dressing room, when a quick, impatient knock made her rise from her kneeling posture and open the door.

Roland entered.

"I was afraid your toilette was not com-

pleted," he said, "for you ladies take such a time to beautify yourselves, and I want to have a little conversation with you, before you go down stairs ; you remember this is Christmas day."

"Indeed, I do, Roland," replied Charlotte, with a gentle sigh, "and I wish you very many happy returns of the festive day ; and myself as well to enjoy your happiness," added she, gaily.

"Thank you," answered Roland, hurriedly ; "I suppose you think my happiness would be very incomplete without my mistress," added he, sarcastically ; "I don't forget last night's scene."

Charlotte hung down her head ; she felt herself blush painfully, and a tear trembled in her eye.

"I can tell you," pursued Roland, "my wife shall not with impunity notice my faults. Your duty is to love, honour, and obey, and if you cannot do the first, you must the two

others. Now you may remember from your unfortunate visit here, last year, that *your* chapel is seven miles distant from this: your mother had her carriage here, and therefore your going thither this day twelve months, was no inconvenience to either my father or mother; but now the case is different, and your saying you wish to go will induce my father to order the carriage for you. My mother will have to go to church in an open vehicle, and the servants and horses will be taken fourteen miles this dreadful day, to gratify you; for my father has such odd notions about not thwarting one's religious feelings. It is my wish Charlotte, you remain at home this day—or, better still, accompany us to church, and thus show how much you love your husband." He took her hand.

"Roland, dear Roland," said Charlotte, solemnly, but in trembling tones—"remember you promised me faithfully, to let me worship God according to my own ideas of right and

wrong—I was brought up a Catholic—well and fully instructed in all the sacred tenets of my faith, and with the help of the Almighty Disposer of all things, I will live and die a Catholic.”

Roland threw her hand from him.

“I am not surprised Roland, you should think me weak and foolish—I have showed, at least in one action, that my principles of religion did not lead me to follow their dictates,” she paused—“I should deeply regret causing any trouble to your kind parents, Roland, but I cannot absent myself to-day from chapel. I am strong and well in health, and seven miles is nothing to a hardy mountaineer; say I may go, dear Roland,”—she tried to take his hand.

He pushed her from him—she receded several paces, turning deadly pale, and he turned quickly round without saying a word, and left the room.

Charlotte did not weep—she called up

all the courage of her mind, and after swallowing a little water, descended quietly to the house-keeper's room, the way to which she well remembered from the preceding year, and there, meeting the smiling face of Mrs. Bartlett, she asked "at what hour the family breakfasted."

"My mistress, madam," replied Mrs. Bartlett, "thinking you would be fatigued from your long journey yesterday, said she would not have it until ten o'clock."

"It is now only half-past eight," said Charlotte, "and if I wait for their breakfast, I shall not be able to attend prayers at Fenstowe, which is seven miles distance, and I remember prayers commence at half-past twelve o'clock."

"But the road is so good, madam," said Mrs. Bartlett, "that by leaving the vicarage at eleven you will be in time."

"Yes, driving it I should I am sure," answered Charlotte, "but I mean to walk, this

cold day, and you will oblige me very much, Mrs. Bartlett, if you send me up a cup of coffee to my dressing room, and if you ask one of the housemaids to be ready to walk there with me, and above all, if you say nothing about my intentions to the family until I am gone."

"Had not you better let some of the chaises be got ready for you, madam, indeed the walk is too long," urged Mrs. Bartlett.

"Oh, I am a very good walker," replied Charlotte, "and you will tell Mrs. Percie when she comes down to breakfast, of my being obliged to leave without seeing her, now I shall go and get ready," and away she tripped; her cup of coffee was soon taken, and accompanied by a maid who remembered her since the last year; she set out. During their walks through the grounds of the vicarage, it was very pleasant, for they were sheltered from the cold north-east wind, and the

road was dry and hard; but on leaving the avenue, they found the public road muddy, and heavy, the wind blowing quite a gale. Charlotte had equipped herself very rationally, unlike a heroine of romance, in warm, winter clothing, with strong boots; yet she paused when she found what she had to encounter, and felt half determined to return—"Roland if he be annoyed," thought she, "at my venturing out at all, will not be more so at my going on, than if I returned, and he cannot be justly angry with me, his wife—he loves so well."—Then her gentle mother's precepts of religion so early instilled into her mind—Miss Malden's instructions, and her own sense of what her religion obliged to, urged her on. "I never omitted attending divine service on a day of obligation, except when ill, since I remember; and if I now fail, on this my first trial, well may Roland and his family condemn me as a weak erring girl. No, I will go on—my father-in-law, so liberal in

his ideas, will make this escapade be forgiven. What an additional pang it would give all at home—at Coomcarne—if they heard I neglected the duties of my religion.” Thus Charlotte cogitated for several minutes. “I am afraid, Susan,” said she turning to the servant that accompanied her, “this is a very long walk I am giving you; and instead of this day being on of enjoyment, I shall make it one of toil to you.”

“Oh! madam,” replied Susan, eagerly, “I am delighted to do you any service, and indeed, madam, it is the greatest pleasure to me to go to Fenstowe, for my only brother is settled there, by trade a cabinet maker; and it is now three months since I saw him, though my mistress is always willing to give me leave me to spend a day with him.”

“In that case, Susan,” said Charlotte, “I will take you on without further regret. Come, we must walk fast;” and on they proceeded as briskly as the wind and dirtiness of the roads

would allow. Charlotte buffeted the weather bravely, though the seven miles seemed to her interminable.

“There is a fearful shower coming, madam,” said Susan; “you had better take shelter in some house before it comes.”

Charlotte looked at her watch—it was little more than ten o’clock; and, more in compassion to her companion’s best dress than for herself, she consented.

They knocked at the door of a neat though small house, which was divided from the road-side by a little flower-garden, in perfect order, though the only blossoms it could boast were some wall-flowers and winter primroses. A young girl opened the door, her dress was very clean, and arranged with scrupulous nicety.

“Will you allow us to take shelter here from this coming shower?” asked Charlotte.

The girl eyed them suspiciously, holding

the door half open. "I must ask my mother," said she, and she closed the door.

Charlotte smiled—her companion seemed to look upon it as nothing strange. In a few minutes the girl returned, followed by a fat, red-faced woman, well dressed, who sturdily asked what they wanted.

"Only shelter from a passing shower, Ma'am," replied Charlotte, gaily, who felt amused by the difficulty of gaining admittance.

"Are ye gentle folks?" enquired the house-owner.

"Half-and-half," answered Charlotte, smiling.

"'Tis strange ye'd be out trudging it such a day as this, then," said she; "but come in, if you like. If that's all I thought ye wanted I wouldn't have left my breakfast, I can tell ye."

"Martha, here, show the leedies to the par-

lour, and stay with them yourself;" and she unceremoniously walked off.

Charlotte and her attendant followed their conductress through a passage into a kitchen, in which blazed a lovely fire; at one end a table was set, on which was every requisite for a very substantial breakfast; the cloth was beautifully white, the pewter vessels shone like silver, and something there was frying on a pan which smelt most savourily. The mistress of the mansion was busy inspecting its contents. At the table sat an elderly man, and four children of different ages, all well dressed, and apparently well pleased, discussing the merits of their breakfast. None moved except the man, who barely inclined his head to Charlotte as she passed him. The parlour adjoined this comfortable room. No fire sullied the brightness of the well-polished grate, but it was furnished in a style that Charlotte would not have expected in so small a house. There were chintz hangings to each of the

windows—one looked to the little garden, the other on a small court-yard ; there was a sofa, a dozen mahogany chairs and a table ; the floor was covered with green baize, and the walls were adorned with several gaudy pictures—these Charlotte carefully inspected : two were the likenesses of celebrated pugilists, two more represented game-cocks fighting ; there was a picture of a shipwreck, with a pea-green sky and a yellow sea ; there was a gentleman fowling—a drunkard falling off his chair—the likeness of Bolivar, very much unlike what he could have been—and, lastly, a cat, worked in red and blue worsteds,—such a heterogeneous assemblage.

“Do you often inhabit this room ?” asked Charlotte of their attendant, Martha.

“Father and mother sometimes do—we don’t !” replied Martha.

“Ah,” thought Charlotte, “how unlike poor Ireland this is. Go to the door of the meanest or most comfortable house, and a ready

welcome awaits one—no need to ask leave to enter—the best chair, in the best apartment, in the warmest corner, is yours ;—and how politely the poorly clad creatures will rise and salute you ; if they be eating will they ever fail to offer you some of their food ?—and so hospitably too. Oh ! I would rather have your mud-cabins, with your smoke and your dirt, my dear country, than England's prettiest cottages ; for in the former there is within what 'passeth show ;' in the latter have I not here experience." Thus she thought as she stood gazing out of the window on the little garden, through which she had entered.

The rain had begun to descend in torrents ; suddenly she saw a carriage driving furiously along the road ; it pulled up at the entrance to the cottage, and two gentlemen sprung from it—and one giving the reins to the servant, followed his companion to the cottage door, which they assailed with very loud knocking.

"I hope these gentlemen won't gain entrance here," said Charlotte, in a low voice, to Susan.—"Mind, if they do, you give them no information as to who we are."

Sounds reached from the kitchen. Charlotte heard the mother of Martha say,—“Oh, they are only half-and-half.”

“Let us in then, good dame,” said a voice Charlotte thought she recognised, “and we'll pay you most willingly, for any damage our wet boots do;” and the landlady, smiling, opened the door, and two gentlemen, well muffled up, followed her.

Charlotte let down her veil and turned her chair towards the window. She could not decide who the intruders were, though the voice she had heard sounded familiar; both gazed on her and on Susan, and seeing the latter, concluded they were both servant maids.

“A bad day this for walking muddy roads,” said one, addressing Susan.

“Yes, sir,” replied Susan, with an air of

dignity, determined not to enter into any conversation.

"They are maids only," said the other gentleman, in French, to his companion. So being under no constraint, they called to Martha to get them something to drink for it was "piercingly cold;" adding, "they would pay for it handsomely."

Martha soon entered with a black bottle and glasses.

"Could we have hot water and sugar, Miss?" asked one.

"And plenty of both?" added the other, gaily.

Charlotte would have given worlds to escape from the room, but she feared to pass lest she might be recognised, and she sat, awaiting the ending of the shower, in no enviable state of mind.

"Come, Hervey," said his companion, "brew us a tumbler each of punch, which you are

such an adept in mixing since your exile in Erin's isle."

"And drinking, too," replied Harvey.

"Harvey—Harvey," thought Charlotte, and she stole a glance from under her bonnet, and saw the officer who, on the night of her first ball at home, spoke so praisingly of her countrywomen.—How many recollections his appearance awakened,—her happiness that night,—her fond parents,—her desertion of them,—and a tear sprang to her eye; she determined he should not recognise her, so she kept her seat, and continued gazing out of the window.

CHAPTER XXII.

“**W**HERE is your wife, Roland?” asked his father, gaily, on his entering the breakfast room, and not seeing Charlotte there. “Your mother is just coming down to give us breakfast.”

“I left her more than an hour since in her dressing room, sir,” replied Roland, colouring highly. “I dare say she will be down soon.”

"I dare say she was tired from her long drive, yesterday," said Barton, "she seemed very much so last night."

"You had better call her down, Roland ; I am anxious for her Christmas greeting," said Mr. Percie.

Roland very reluctantly left the room ; he slowly ascended the stairs, opened the door of their bed-room, and called, "Charlotte," inside it was her dressing-room, the door of which was closed ; he knocked at it, and no sound could he hear, he felt a degree of tremor creeping over him, he remembered his hastiness in parting with her.—Could she have fainted ? he opened the door, and started when he saw the room empty. On the hearth rug were a pair of her shoes, so small they were, Roland could scarcely fancy them his wife's, he took one up, it was marked "Charlotte ;" a small table was near the fire place, a cup with a little coffee and a piece of unbroken toast were on it. "Where could she

have gone? To mass probably! and in the cold and wet! he hoped not—his poor young wife—it was very obstinate of her if she did so, and he determined to make her regret it, and with this resolve he quitted the room. On the stairs he met Mrs. Bartlett.

“I’m afraid the dear young lady will be very wet, Master Roland,” said she, kindly.

She was a very good-natured soul, and had lived in her present situation many years.

“Where is she gone, Mrs. Bartlett?” asked Roland, impatiently.

“Dear me, I thought of course you knew, sir!” she replied; “she is gone to chapel to Fenstowe, and she would walk, she did not mind the distance she said; she took Susan Hutton with her—she is nigh to it by this time.”

Roland quickly descended to the breakfast room.

“Why did you allow Charlotte to take such

a journey a day like this, Roland?" enquired his mother on his entrance.

"She went without my leave, I assure you, ma'am," answered Roland; "if she be wet or tired, I am not to blame."

"If she were bent on going to chapel," pursued Mrs. Percie, "I would have sent the carriage with her. Your father would have driven me to church in the gig. I hope she will not suffer from her rashness; she looked delicate last night," added she: "We must take care of her."

"Did Charlotte say nothing of her intentions, Roland?" asked Mr. Percie.

"She said something about her wish not to miss attending prayers to-day," replied he, "really I can't remember what—she is most blameable in having gone off in this manner."

"She is very young and very enthusiastic in her ideas, my dear boy," said Mr. Percie, "so we must excuse her first youthful failing

—if failing it can be called—you and Barton can go in the carriage to bring her back; by leaving immediately, you would overtake her before she reach the church, at Fenstowe, and I'll engage to take your mother safely to Marthorpe."

"She does not deserve I should take such trouble, and, indeed, I will not," exclaimed Roland: "my mother must not be deprived of her carriage, and Charlotte must learn to *obey*."

"Did you desire her not to go?" enquired his father.

"I told her it was my wish she should remain at home," answered Roland, "and I hope she may be taught a lesson. Barton, I beg you will allow her to find her way back without your aid," and Roland finished his breakfast in silence, and then quitted the room.

"Roland seems much annoyed," said his

mother: "Barton, you will not go to meet Charlotte, of course," continued she.

"It would annoy Roland more if I did," said he,

Richard Leslie, who, since Emma's death, had remained at Marthorpe Vicarage, heard the conversation in silence, but determined not to permit his new cousin to return alone. He went to the stables, and there secured a horse; this he assisted in harnessing to the gig, and, in great haste lest his errand might be discovered and prevented, he drove off quickly by a back avenue, to avoid discovery; after a considerable round, he gained the high road to Fenstowe, and despite the very heavy rain and storm, he urged on the horse to its full speed, up hill and down hill were all alike—he drove furiously along. For some miles he got on gaily, but descending a hill, from the top of which, the cottage in which Charlotte was, was visible, the horse stumbled and

fell—the shaft was broken, and Richard saved himself from being thrown out, by grasping the seat firmly. The horse, rather tired from the violent driving, quietly pulled up, and poor Richard bewailed the accident in mournful tones for several minutes. “If I had ropes I’d soon mend it,” said he. There was no house by the way side, and after a long delay, he got the shaft apparently together by means of the lash of the whip, his pocket handkerchief cut into strings, and his hat band; he surveyed his work very much pleased, he got cautiously in, and drove very gently on a short way, when a jerk of the wheel over some stones, destroyed his mending, and the shaft broke again, rendering the second break worse than the first. Richard got out, drew the vehicle on one side of the road, mounted the horse, and proceeded up a green lane, to a farm house, where he, after some parleying and a good price, obtained some ropes and the assistance of the farmer’s

sons. After several efforts, they succeeded in rendering the gig fit to travel. Richard recompensed them for their trouble, and looking at his watch, found it was past twelve o'clock. "I cannot now hope to overtake Charlotte, so I may drive slowly," thought Richard, and following this notion, he went gently forward, and, indeed, if he had been very anxious to go on at full speed, his steed was inclined only to move on slowly, and the state of his whip gave the tired animal the advantage over him. He did not reach Fenstowe until after one o'clock, and driving up to the principal hotel, he gave the horse in charge to an ostler, asking if the vehicle could be mended in an hour: he was told not, it being Christmas day, and all engaged at divine service; could he get a vehicle to harness the horse to: Not at that hotel, and Richard sought through the town. After a search of more than an hour, he procured a post-chaise, and in this, he drove up to the hotel where

he had first stopped; here he ordered luncheon, and gave his horse and gig in charge to the hotel keeper, begging both might be taken good care of, until the next day. He got into the chaise delighted at having at last secured such a pleasant way of travelling, for Charlotte.

‘Where to, your honour?’ enquired the driver.

“To the Catholic Chapel,” replied Richard, throwing himself back with a feeling of great satisfaction.

“Catholic Chapel!” said the man, “I knows no such a place; ’tis the church he means,” and off he drove, and stopped at the church gate.

“This is the church,” said Richard, who had been several times there at service.

“Yes, sir,” answered the driver, “is not it here you told me to come to?”

“No,” said Richard, “the Catholic Chapel.”

“Oh ! chapel,” quoth the man, “I knows,” and he ascended the box, and stopped next at a Methodist Chapel.

Richard had never been in a Catholic Church, so he was unacquainted with the forms of worship of that religion : he entered, the congregation were all kneeling, and some one was praying aloud, evidently an extempore prayer. Richard had heard of the altars and lights and images, used in Catholic Chapels, and he looked around, but could see none. He stood gazing to try and discover Charlotte among the crowd, when he felt himself touched on the shoulder, and an elderly lady desired him to join with the godly, in offering to the Lord, the tribute of his homage—Richard knelt. The priest, as he supposed, continued his prayer, the sense and words of which, were quite thrown away upon him, for he was eagerly watching every bonnet, in the hope that some one shaded Charlotte’s face. The prayer ended—it had continued a

long time—the congregation all rose from their knees, and Richard took his station at the door, to watch them as they passed. A lady came closely veiled: she was in mourning, so was Charlotte. He bent forward to look at her closely; she stopped at the porch door, and Richard, almost certain of her identity, said softly, “I came to bring you back, Mrs. Percie.”

“You mistake me, sir!” said the lady, haughtily; “I am not Mrs. Percie.”

“Pardon me, madam,” said Richard, “I mistook you for a cousin.”

The lady raised her veil, and discovered a very comely set of features, but quite unlike those of our heroine.

“I beg to apologise,” continued Richard;—and, seeing the lady hesitate, he added, “can I be of any service, madam?”

“None, sir, thank you,” replied she,—“I wait for my father;” and through the crowd

advanced towards her the supposed priest, whose arm she took.

Richard looked his astonishment.

"May I ask, sir," said Richard, respectfully, "if this be the Catholic Chapel?"

"The Popish Chapel!—the Just Lord forbid," said the man he addressed, fervently;—"it is the chapel of the congregation of blessed evangelicals—a pure and holy sect, whose ——"

"Pardon me, sir," interrupted Richard, "I am in great haste, can you direct me to this Popish Chapel?"

"Young man, I would not send thee to perdition," said he, solemnly.

Richard bowed, stepped into the chaise, and drove off, desiring his driver to find out the way to the Catholic place of worship, promising a reward if he did so.

The promise of money soon brightened the man's intellects; he stopped at a corner of

a street, and hearing some Irish men talking near the chaise, Richard knowing most of the poorer classes in that country were Catholics, asked one of them to shew him the way to their chapel.

“Ah! then, that I will, and welcome, sir, but may be, ’tis coming to mass you are, and sure that same is over this hour.”

“Is the chapel near?” asked Richard.

“Oh, quite convaynient to your honor, here hard by; in the next street—and a hole of a place ’tis too; but ’tis the heart the Almighty looks to when we pray, and not the place we pray in.”

Richard had left his chaise and followed his conductor on foot to the chapel, which was extremely small, and only three persons were in it; these, he soon convinced himself, were strangers to him; and he did not stop to examine the edifice, but quickly regained his chaise. He held out a shilling to his guide, but poor Pat refused it, saying, “he would be

sorry to let the gentleman pay him for what was a pleasure to him—long life to the young gentleman.”

“If I go back to luncheon Charlotte will be near Marthorpe Vicarage, before I overtake her, but I must pay for it,” thought he, “so I may as well swallow a few mouthfuls,” and with this determination, he managed to eat surprisingly well in a few minutes, and then having paid his bill, got into his chaise and urged the driver to his full speed, he reached Marthorpe Vicarage without meeting Charlotte or her attendant. Nor had she returned when he arrived there. His uncle came out to the door to meet him, and to him he related his adventures as briefly as possible.

“You had better return to meet this giddy wife of yours, Roland,” said Mr. Percie, who sought him in his room, after relating Richard’s rambles in search of her.

“No, father,” said Roland, “I will not ; but Barton can go if he be willing.”

“I will make her sorry for this,” thought he, as his father left him again alone.

Barton and Richard very good naturedly set off to seek poor Charlotte.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"It is two miles from here to Fenstowe, is it not, Harvey," asked his companion, "and twelve from that to the town of M——, and six from thence to your aunt's place, making in all twenty miles, no despicable drive on a day like this."

"Unfortunately, my dear fellow," replied Harvey, "it is nine miles from M—— to Rendar hall, making in all a drive of twenty three miles, you know you would stay last night with your gentle Rosalinda, so blame

me not, if we are late for the good things at my aunt's; and if my gay cousins, Lucy and Frederica should question me about our delay, you may trust to my discretion—you know we promised to reach Rendar hall yesterday evening—at this rate of going we shall not be there this evening.”

“And if you attempt to tell tales about Rosalinda, I'll tell of your ‘tale of love,’ and the pangs of disappointment, &c.” said his fellow traveller.

“Let us speak in French,” said Harvey, blushing, and speaking in that language, “these maids may repeat our conversation.”

Charlotte smiled.

“There is no use in quizzing me, Philip,” continued Harvey, “for you know my love is married. I made a complete fool of myself certes, though she was not the wiser. At a ball at her father's she overheard a conversation Walhouse and I had; I certainly admired her, and you know I have such a silly habit

of blushing. Well, Walhouse with his jokes used to provoke me so about this 'fair Spaniard,' and I in a sober fit, one wet day, took to writing verses to Charlotte, these were found and read aloud at mess, and you may fancy I got well quizzed; it was a relief to me when our regiment changed quarters; and this fair lady I hear eloped last Autumn in Scotland, married and displeased her parents, who have not seen her since."

"Oh, you have been enquiring I see, Harvey," said his companion, jocosely.

"Why, to tell the truth, I have Philip—I may as well confess. She was a beautiful girl, and so unaffected—and then her family, so fond and so proud of her. She formed some attachment to a young officer in Exmouth last year, when she was staying there with her family. Her mother was delicate; and this choice of her's is a parson's son, and poor, I am sorry to hear for her sake. So you see, Philip, I really liked the girl; and I'll make a bargain—

you can have cousin Lucy, and I'll have cousin Frederica, to flirt with during our stay at my Aunt's, and we'll be silent about the absent and here is their health now in most potent punch.—May Charlotte be as happy as she deserves—and may Rosalinda be an old maid, if she refuse to marry Philip Gifford; and now, most puissant Philip, I do aver the rain looks as if it meant to cease, so I will away to light a cigar,” and Harvey quietly put on his outside coat and muffler and left the room; his companion soon followed his example.

Charlotte determined to try and escape from the room without their seeing her.

“Here is some compensation for your long watch, Martha,” said Charlotte, giving her some money. “Show us to the door, quietly, like a good girl;” and they effected their exit unnoticed by the gentlemen, who were both standing near the kitchen fire.

“We must lose no time now, Susan, on the

road," said Charlotte, and they both hastened forward.

Near the town the gentleman passed them in their drag, driving furiously.

"Beautiful legs and feet, that tall one has," ejaculated Harvey, as they passed. "I'd swear she was a lady, only her dress is so covered with mud."

"I remember the way to the chapel—we came hither three times last year; it is down this street," said Charlotte, stopping at the entrance to a narrow street. "You can meet me here, Susan, at two o'clock, if your prayers be over, or I will remain in the chapel until you come for me."

I'll be with you at two, precisely, madam," said Susan.

Charlotte entered the humble chapel, and had to wait there an hour before the service commenced. When it was over it was just two o'clock, and Charlotte left with the first of the congregation, remembering how far she

had to return. She reached the end of the street, and stood looking round for Susan ;— she saw her at a distance coming towards her. The flags, from the continued hail showers, had become very slippery, and our heroine, hastening unguardedly on, slipped on them, and in falling turned her ankle and sprained it severely.

“ Oh, madam, I fear you are hurt—can you walk ?” asked Susan, eagerly.

“ I have hurt my foot,” answered Charlotte, limping on. “ I fear I cannot walk all the way back, it hurts me so much—what shall we do ?”

“ My brother lives just here, madam,” said Susan, “ if you take my arm and walk quietly you can reach his house ;” and Charlotte limped on, every step giving her extreme pain.

Susan led her into a very comfortable house, in which her brother received them very civilly.

“If you could procure me any kind of a vehicle to take me to Marthorpe Vicarage, I should be very much obliged,” said Charlotte.

“I will go and try, madam ; but I fear you will have some delay here, for there are very few carriages to be had in this town.”

Charlotte sat by the fire writhing in pain ; she feared to take off her boot lest she might not be able to put it on again. She remembered once a school friend of her's, having sprained her foot, and being confined to a sofa, for nearly a month. She recollected she had only a fortnight to stay at Marthorpe Vicarage.

Susan's attentions were unremitting, once she was out of the room, a chaise drove by, and Charlotte rose from her seat, fancying it was the vehicle for her, but the pain so increased from standing, she had to resume it immediately. Susan brought in some biscuits

and a bottle of currant wine, of both of which Charlotte partook, though slightly, for appetite she felt none. A long hour and a half passed, the tantalizing chaise had rattled by three times, still Susan's brother had not returned: four o'clock came, and soon after it he drove up, in an old fly, which, he assured Charlotte, was the only vehicle he could get to hire for love or money; the horse too was old, so Charlotte feared it would be very late before she arrived at her destination. However she thanked him, and assisted by Susan, she with difficulty got into it, and they set off at a slow pace; on they jogged, darkness soon surrounded them, the wind howled, and the rain fell heavily, and an occasional moan from poor Charlotte, was the only break to the dreary silence. In ascending a hill, about two miles from the vicarage, the vehicle stopped: Charlotte called out to know what was the matter, fearing some new delay; the door

was opened, and Barton Percie, exclaimed:—

“Oh ! Charlotte, how you have frightened us—here is Richard, who has spent the whole day chasing you, in Fenstowe.”

“And Roland ?” asked Charlotte.

“I left him gloomily brooding over the fire, in your room,” said Barton ; “come, don’t delay—it is late—give me your arm.”

“I must take time, my dear Barton,” replied she, softly, “I fear I have sprained my foot.”

Very carefully they assisted her to the chaise, she did not allow a single complaint to escape her lips. Richard recounted his adventures, and she accounted for having missed him. They soon reached the vicarage ; it was nearly seven o’clock, Charlotte felt herself tremble, her father-in-law came out to meet her, and heard with regret, of her accident.

“The next day, Charlotte, you attend your

chapel," said he, seriously, "Roland will accompany you to the door. We must not scold you now though, seeing you are in pain, I hope it is not much."

"It is excessive," said she, faintly "I wish I were in my own room."

Barton and Richard came forward, and with great caution they raised Charlotte up, and took her to her room in their arms. Roland was not there. Mrs. Percie came up quickly, she kindly took off Charlotte's cloak and bonnet, and refrained from saying a word of reproach, seeing what pain she suffered. She tried to take off the boot on the injured foot, but so dreadfully swelled had it become, she feared to trust her.

"Barton," said she, "tell Roland to come up, I want him.—We must send to Marthorpe for Mr. Price.—Tell your father too to come up."

After some delay, Mr. Percie came up alone,

he took Charlotte's hand, and it was burningly hot—he felt her pulse, it beat wildly. “I am something of an Esculapius. Charlotte, let me see your foot—with a pair of good scissors I will undertake to cut off the boot without hurting you—will you let me try?”

“Most willingly, my dear sir,” replied Charlotte gently—but I am giving you such trouble—you cannot think how much I regret——”

“Make Roland come up,” whispered Mr. Percie to his wife, “he would not stir for me.”

Mrs. Percie went down and vainly endeavoured to reason Roland out of his feelings of annoyance towards his wife.

In the meantime, Mr. Percie proceeded quietly with his operation; and Charlotte bore the pain without a murmur—the boot was taken off, but the foot was terribly swelled.

"Would you not like to go to bed, Charlotte," asked Mrs. Percie entering the room, "you must feel great fatigue—I have sent for Mr. Price, our village apothecary, and I should like to have you comfortably settled in bed before he comes."

"If you leave me to the care of good Mrs. Bartlett, dear Mrs. Percie, and go to dinner, I should," answered Charlotte, "and when you return, you will find me quite easy; and ask Roland to come to me for one minute," whispered she, "and if he come," thought she, "I'll not mind the pain."

But his resolve was taken, and come he would not—he felt he had been treated badly, and he determined to make Charlotte feel so.

Charlotte bore all Mr. Price's applications most heroically—the foot was leeches and cupped. Mrs. Percie kindly attended her and bandaged.

"I will call early to-morrow, Mrs. Percie," said Mr. Price, taking his departure—"I would recommend you, madam," added he, addressing Charlotte, "to keep yourself as cool and quiet as possible, and of course not to get out of bed before I see you to-morrow. I think a soporific quite necessary, so I shall send you one up from the village as soon as possible," and wishing both ladies "good night," Mr. Price withdrew.

Charlotte listened to every footstep on the stairs, hoping to see her husband enter, but he came not—and long before the composing draught reached the vicarage, she had sunk into a dreamless sleep, from mere exhaustion.

Mrs. Percie administered the draught, and soon saw her sink again into a profound slumber.

It was late when Roland entered his room, and he did so noiselessly; he left it next

morning before poor Charlotte had awakened from her deep sleep. Her first thought was her husband, she started up, and called his name, but he was not there. She remembered yesterday's adventures, and tears flowed plentifully from her eyes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DURING the night, the wind changed to the north-west, and Roland, when he looked out in the morning, saw the country covered with snow. "I'll have a good day's shooting," said he to the servant, who was arranging the breakfast table; "bring me up some coffee," and before nine o'clock, Roland was enjoying his favourite sport, whilst his wife was suffering from his neglect of her, even more than from the sprain, though her foot was ex-

tremely painful. Mrs. Percie felt for the young wife, when she learned that her son had gone out shooting. She told it to Charlotte, and had she scanned her countenance, she would have seen how pale she became: though her only remark was, she hoped he would have good sport.

Mr. Price arrived early, and advised Charlotte to remain quietly in bed.

"The sprain might be very tedious in its cure if she did not keep perfectly quiet," he said.

She determined to follow his advice very strictly.

After breakfast Mr. Percie came to see her.

"Did you make up your little quarrel with Roland, this morning?" asked he, gaily, as he seated himself near her bed, and took her hand.

"I was provokingly drowsy all the morning," replied Charlotte, blushing; "indeed,

I did not awake until long past nine o'clock—and last night I was so overpowered with sleep, I merely remember Mrs. Percie giving me a draught.”

“Roland will bring you in some peace-offerings in the shape of woodcocks,” said he, “and then you’ll kiss and make friends, as the children say.”

“Oh, indeed, my dear Mr. Percie, I was the offender, and I feel Roland has reason to be displeased with me.”

“Certainly,” answered he, “it was a very girlish freak, to say the least of it, to go off seven miles with only a female attendant, on such a day as yesterday was—without your husband’s sanction—and when you might have judged that your mother-in-law would have willingly given you the carriage, to take you to Divine Service. By the articles of our faith we are taught to believe the ‘Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith.’ But

again, the XVIII. article, says: 'They also are to be had accursed that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For holy scripture doth set out to us, only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.' We must charitably hope none remain wilfully in error, and that all 'through the name of Jesus Christ will be saved that live the lives of christians.' My dear child you will think I am reading you a regular homily, but your future life is to be passed amid Protestants, and I wish to speak seriously to you, on religion. You have been born and reared a Roman Catholic, and I hope you will always live up to the dictates of your religion: you shall have; I promise you, free will in the exercise of its precepts, and if any doubts should arise in your mind, as to its truth or freedom

from error, you shall have unbiassed instructions from me, as far as in me lies. I believe, most firmly, my faith to be the true one, and if I did not—if I entertained the slightest doubt relative to its doctrines, I assure you, solemnly, I would seek the truth, and leave this home, cost me what it may—religion is too sacred to be thought of, in comparison, to any worldly feeling. This world and its passions and vanities speedily vanish, but religion looks beyond, and teaches us that it is not for a few years of strife we live here below that we have been created. I would regret, Charlotte, to see you unadvisedly leave the faith of your childhood; the love you bear your husband may urge you to do so, but let not such a motive prevail—let each serve God faithfully in their own faith. I have affected you, my dear child,” added he kindly, seeing tears rolling down Charlotte’s cheeks.

"It is your kindness that has done so, my dear Mr. Percie," said Charlotte, gently.

"I hope to merit a continuance of it.—My religion, believe me, I shall not leave—at least, I trust not—it is a link that binds me to my youthful days—my home—my country."

"Even higher motives than these Charlotte," said Mr. Percie, "must lead you to continue a Catholic, or your religion will not be free from worldly feelings.—Could you," added he, after a short pause, "summon up courage sufficient to write the letter to your parents we spoke of the night before last?"

"With your kind assistance I think I can," answered she, smiling—she was nervously anxious to have it finished before Roland returned.

Mr. Percie brought her writing materials, and Mrs. Percie propped her up in bed with pillows, and kindly folded a warm shawl

round her; her hand trembled violently, and tears would force themselves down her cheeks at every appeal to her parents' feelings.

"I feel so weak, dear Mr. Percie," said she softly, "I cannot refrain my tears."

"They do honour to your good heart, my dear Charlotte," said he, "I should be sorry to think you felt your fault less."

"Perhaps the exertion is too much for Charlotte," said Mrs. Percie, addressing her husband.

"Oh, no, indeed it is not," replied Charlotte hurriedly—"the letter is just finished."

Four o'clock struck, she thought Roland ought to return, so she endeavoured to dry her tears and succeeded in finishing the letter, and gave it into Mr. Percie's hands, with many thanks for his kindness. She was then left alone—her thoughts wandered to her happy fire-side, at Coomcarne—the joyous

tones of her little sisters—their happiness in inspecting their Christmas boxes—her gentle mother's smile—her father's hearty laugh—Manuel's happy face—and Miss Malden's quiet enjoyment—and poor Ellen her faithful maid, whom she had left at Edinburgh barracks, not wishing to add to the expense of their travelling, fearing to annoy her husband—and that husband so devotedly loved—she lay there in stillness and solitude, thinking of him—of them all.

When one feels they have given way to ill-temper, they feel a degree of annoyance against themselves; Roland had scarcely left the inclosures of the vicarage grounds, before he regretted his hastiness in leaving the house without seeing his wife, and trying to allay the pain, he knew she suffered—for during the night he had heard her frequently moan in her sleep, but he consoled himself, saying, "I can't now return until dinner hour," and he pursued his

way, but very bad sport attended him, for though he saw several birds, he succeeded in shooting only one, and vexed and tired, he returned to the vicarage: he went quietly up to his own room, he opened the door gently, there was no candle, but the fire burned brightly, and not fancying his wife was in bed, he walked across the room to her dressing room.

Charlotte started up in bed at seeing him; "Roland, I am so delighted you are come!" said she, as he folded her in his arms; "dearest Roland," murmured she, "I have indeed been to blame, but I see you forgive me."

"Your fault has been punished severely, I am afraid, Charlotte," said he: "I would not speak to you last night, I was so really displeased, but now I must forgive you, I suppose; does your foot pain you much?"

"It did, last night," replied Charlotte,

smiling, "but then your being away pained me more, my dear Roland—to day it is still swelled, and Mr. Price desired me to remain in bed, but I hope in some few days it will be quite well, I intend to take great care of it."

"It is most provoking accident," said Roland; "you will not, I dare say, be able to stir out while we remain here, and you will expect me, I suppose, to play the part of lover to you."

"No: indeed, Roland," said she, sweetly, "I will expect only an occasional visit from from you. I hope you will go out every day, to shoot or ride, as if you had no wife—only to take care of yourself for that wife's sake"

"I ought to be happy in having such a wife," thought Roland; he kissed her and went down to dinner in very good humour with himself.

Next day Charlotte was allowed, by Mr. Price, to sit up on a sofa, in her dressing room, and when Roland placed her on it, he thought she looked really beautiful. Her new relations were very kind and attentive to her, and in occasional visits from each of the family the days of her banishment, as Mr. Percie called it, passed very pleasantly to her.

Roland, the first day of her getting up, wanted to remain all day with her, but she would not allow him, insisting on his devoting some of the day to taking exercise in the open air, and she argued her right to make him take care of himself, so sweetly, he could not find it possible to frown upon her.

In a week she was convalescent enough to come down stairs aided by her husband, and so carefully, for his sake, did she take care of herself, that at the end of the fort-

night, she was able to leave Marthorpe Vicarage with him ; having endeared herself to each of her new relations, by her unfailing amiability.

CHAPTER XXV.

It was the last night of the year, and a cheerless cold night it was—the wind howled in fitful squalls and rattled the windows in their frames, at Coomcare Park.

“You will have a bad night, going to W——, to this ball, Manuel,” said his father, addressing him, as they sat tête-à-tête together after dinner.

“That reminds me that I have not much time to lose, my dear father,” replied Manuel,

“for I promised to join the Mastertons at tea,” and finishing his wine he rose to prepare for his departure.

It was a very comfortable room, the dining-room, at Coomcarne Park: the fire in the ample grate burned brightly—the closely-drawn window curtains excluded all air from without—and on the hearth rug lay an old dog, evidently enjoying the warmth of his situation; he occasionally stretched himself with a pleased air. Mr. O’Carroll moved his chair near the fire—the dog raised himself from his recumbent posture, and looking up in his face, wagged his tail. Mr. O’Carroll patted him fondly—“Poor old Sam, I love you well for your Mistress’ sake—she left you, but you shall be fed and guarded—you are all she left us to remember her,” and a tear stole down his cheek. “Poor Charlotte,” continued he, musingly, “so beautiful and good you were, it is no wonder *he* should love you, and well must you have loved him when

you left the parents that idolized you for his *his* sake. My poor child, you were carefully reared in every comfort, such a night as this in cold barracks will make you think perhaps of your once happy and comfortable home—of your father and mother—their care and their love—”

The door opened and a servant entered with the post bag. Mr. O’Carroll took out its contents placed them on the table, and gave the empty bag to the servant. He took up one letter—assuredly it was Charlotte’s writing—the hand trembled when it was written—the address was not very plain, for the letter had been “missent”—the seal was black—and the father trembled. He sat down with it in his hand, he drew his chair towards the table, and broke the seal—and the letter was from Charlotte; such a letter as the father felt he was proud his child wrote, but it moved not his resolve.

“I cannot forgive her!” was his exclamation.

tion, and he put the letter into his bosom, and went into the drawing room to show it to his wife.

A pretty sight awaited him, Mary and Camilla were dancing together, a figure dance, and both looked so happy and so lovely—their little cheeks flushed by the exercise, and their eyes sparkling. Miss Malden was playing a lively air for them on the piano, which had been brought into the drawing room; for since Charlotte's marriage the music room was deserted. Mrs. O'Carroll reclined on a sofa, watching her darlings with great pleasure, and ever and anon applauding them. Mr. O'Carroll waited until the dance was ended, and then rewarding each of the children with a kiss, he begged his wife to come with him to the dining room.

"No bad news, I trust, dear Henry, of either of the absent ones," said Mrs. O'Carroll, faintly.

"None, my love," replied her husband, and he gave her a chair near his own, and he read to her Charlotte's letter.

"The dear child," said her mother, kindly, "indeed she deeply repents of her fault; but I know your determination on this head, my dear Henry, so I shall urge nothing in her defence."

"I am glad her new relations are kind to her, my dear wife," said Mr. O'Carroll, "love her they must when they know her well."

"I am sorry, Henry, you don't know the Percies," observed Mrs. O'Carroll;—"you could better judge than I can, what poor Charlotte's chance of happiness is among them."

"My dear Camilla," replied he, "I am really rejoiced I do not. Did I know them as you do, I might be led, through a feeling of etiquette to them, to forgive the undutiful conduct of my child, and this would be erring

against my principles. I know *her* husband but slightly—you know how engrossed my mind was at that time with the hopes of Lord Archgolle's attachment to Charlotte. I never dreamed my child had thrown away her young affections—thrown away I say, for the man that could urge her to sacrifice her first duties to his love, must be unworthy her love."

Manuel here entered to say "good night."

"Read that letter, my son," said his father, extending Charlotte's letter to him, and Manuel did so—"make no comment on it," continued he, for it is useless, and he took the letter from Manuel's hand and threw it into the fire, and yet when he saw it blazing away he regretted his hastiness; the signature—"your gratefully attached, though offending child, Charlotte Percie"—remained on a black part of the fire, and was there before him, pleading powerfully in behalf of the writer.

"Here is a letter from Henry," said Ma-

nuel, who had been eagerly examining the contents of the post-bag.

Mr. O'Carroll raised the poker, gave the fire several stirs, and poor Charlotte's letter, which had cost her so many tears, was all destroyed.

Henry wrote in the gayest style, wishing them all very many happy returns of the new year. In conclusion, he mentioned that having had a cough during most part of the winter, he was obliged to remain much within doors, and to take great care of himself. A doctor, who had attended him, recommended some months' change of air, in his native land, when the spring weather came, and Henry said with his father's leave, he would take some vacation among them, in April. His father wrote that night to beg of him to do so as soon as he could, and cautioned him to take every care of himself.

With Henry's letter came one from the

Professor, the head master of the college, extolling his talents, amiability, and character most highly; he had obtained several honours though such a short time there, and the parents with delight read these praises.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ROLAND and Charlotte arrived in Liverpool, the second day after they left Marthorp Vicarage, and Roland in passing along a quay, met Lord Archgolle, who turned pale in recognizing him, and stopped, extended his hand, and faltered out his congratulations on his marriage. He did not ask for his wife, but hurriedly bid Roland good bye, saying he was going next morning to Durham, to attend the death-bed of an aged uncle of his.

"We were going that way, too," thought Roland, when they parted, but I promise you I'll not give you the pleasure of our company on your journey. Just then seeing a vessel by the quay side, with a sign up, marking it for Glasgow; he went on board, and finding it was to sail at high tide next day, he took places for his wife and himself on board; the accommodations were very tolerable, and he knew Charlotte would be pleased at any thing that pleased him. He returned briskly to the hotel, and passing a private room, the door of which was open, he heard Lord Archgolle's voice within; he hurried on, and reached his own sitting room.

Charlotte had just finished a letter to his mother, and she asked if he had any message to send home.

"Will you let me read the letter, Charlotte?" enquired he, laying his hand on it.

"With pleasure, dear Roland," replied she,

gaily ; “ you know I can have no secrets from you.”

He read through the letter. She possessed the talent of writing well—agreeably, without the superabundance of words that generally grace young ladies’ letters. What a mania for letter-writing some young misses are infected with? And how some labour to use every word that can be pressed into their service—where one would do using three, oftentimes more. Roland smiled—his own peculiar smile—as he gave back the letter, and said, “ my mother must be gratified by this account of our travels ; but we are not going back the same way we came, as you say here.”

“ How glad I am of that, dear Roland,” exclaimed his wife—I do love variety. How are we to frame one course to our quarters in ‘ Auld Reekie ? ’ ”

“ Why in a way that will please from its variety, at least, Charlotte,” replied Roland “ I have taken berths in a trading vessel bound

from here to Glasgow, and thence we will proceed to Edinburgh, which is only forty-three or forty-four miles north-west of it, and thus we shall save the long land journey."

Dinner was then brought in, and Charlotte exerted all her powers of agreeability to entertain her husband during the evening.

"I have a mind to bring you some one to take tea with you, Charlotte," said Roland, gaily—for he felt proud of his wife, so handsome did she look. "An old friend of yours," continued he, whom I met to-day, one that is staying in this hotel. Are you not very curious to know who it is?"

"If it be any one I knew at home—I mean Coomcarne Park," said she, eagerly, "I shall be delighted to see either him, or her—perhaps one of the Mastertons."

"No—guess again," said Roland.

"Captain Harvey," guessed Charlotte, blushing brightly.

“Who is he?—I don’t know him,” said Roland, hastily; “is he another of your devoted admirers?”

Charlotte paused—but she was so thoroughly ingenuous, that she told her husband in her own playful way, of her acquaintance with him—and of her rencontre on Christmas-day, she ended by saying, “I tell you this because I like you, dear Roland to know every thought of mine.”

He did not look quite pleased, and he became silent; tea was brought in and taken away without an allusion to their acquaintance, and Charlotte, whatever curiosity she felt, and she was woman enough to feel a little share of that womanly failing, repressed it. In going to her bed room, she was gratified however, for at the end of a long passage, with a bed-room candle in his hand, she saw advancing quickly, Lord Archgolle—he was not near enough to recognise her—she turned into a room next her, closed the door, and let him

pass, she then quietly gained her own room, and told this to Roland, a frown was her only reward.

Poor Charlotte, how devotedly you loved your careless husband—with all the fervor of your young warm heart.

The next morning, after a hasty breakfast, Roland hurried Charlotte on board the ship, and they found the vessel was not to sail until ebb tide, at two o'clock. The vessel was small, the cabin into which Charlotte was shown, was not above four feet square, and in it were two berths, miserably confined they looked, and dirty too; but she did not complain; a short inconvenience she thought of no consequence. A sister-in-law of the Captain's, a delicate creature, with a baby, going to join her husband, in Glasgow, was to share the cabin with Charlotte. The cabin which Roland was to occupy with seven or eight others, was of tolerable size. Charlotte's foot was not yet sufficiently strong to allow

her to walk, so she sat on deck watching the busy scene around her, and her husband strolled about the town. At length the anchor was weighed, the crew all on board, and the vessel floated gently off; a slight ripple alone played on the water, and smoothly with a scarcely perceptible motion, the ship sailed down the Mersey.

"I hope it will blow fresher than this, Captain Waring, when we get outside Rock Point," said a man near Charlotte, addressing the Captain of the vessel.

"It's likely to keep calm enough to-night," replied the Captain, "what wind there is, is blowing steadily off shore."

"When could we reach Glasgow, with a favourable wind?" asked Roland, somewhat impatiently.

"This is—let me see—Thursday: well Friday, Saturday.—Why the voyage may be short and may be long; we ought to do it in two days, but contrary winds do spring up,

and we may be four days about it," and with this satisfactory intelligence, the Captain walked off to give some directions to the sailors.

While there was any light, Charlotte remained on deck with her husband, and felt quite amused, watching the various vessels that passed from many a clime, and then the shores on either side, studded with villas, and she thought of her own land, away in the distant sea.

"That is Formby Point now before us, Madam," said the Captain to Charlotte, as he assisted her along the deck. The vessel began to rock a little unpleasantly, and she wished to go down to the cabin. "I hope we shall make good way to night," and he called to his sister-in-law, at the cabin door, and desired her to take every care of Mrs. Percie, who was ere long stretched, or rather cramped into her small berth, dreadfully sick

with that overpoweringly, sickening malady—sea sickness. She had no idea of fear, but now she longed to be again on land, or even breathing the pure air on the deck; but to stir was impossible; the vessel rolled, and the cabin was in darkness, her companion slept soundly, and Charlotte thought the night would never end; yet it was a night of enjoyment compared to the next one. Towards morning she dosed, but her sleeping thoughts were disturbed by frightful dreams, and a gentle hand laid on her shoulder made her start and awake: it was her companion, Mrs. Waring, who was dressed.

“You were moaning so frightfully, Mrs. Percie,” said she, “I thought it better to awake you. Will you take something? a cup of coffee, I would recommend. It is near eleven o’clock; if you were up and dressed, and on deck, you would feel quite well.”

Charlotte thanked her, took some coffee,

but it was late in the afternoon when her lady would allow her to leave the cabin, and then she had to be assisted on deck. The Captain was most attentive to her ; she hoped they had made good way, during the night.

“Very good, Madam,” said he, “consider the wind ; this morning the breeze freshened. See, there is Rossall Point, we are leaving behind us.—That bay is Lancaster Bay.—You see the opening of the river Loyne, on which the town of Lancaster stands.—Farther on is the Bay of Morcambe.—You see the Island in the distance, that is Walney Island.”

“I took a canter along the sands, with Manuel, last July, by the edge of Morcambe Bay,” said Charlotte to Roland, who was just then standing near her ; Mamma was fatigued, and we stopped to rest two days at Lancaster, and my dear father ordered me a long ride.”

"Which you enjoyed very much, I dare say," said Roland, "notwithstanding my absence."

"I lived in the hope of meeting you soon, you know, Roland," replied she playfully, "and therefore sweet hope gave me enjoyment."

The twilight was deepening into night, when the ship passed Walney Island. The sun had sunk with a deep, red light in his ocean bed, tinging all the eastern hemisphere with his parting rays, and the clouds, glowed in a rich, crimson beauty.

"In my own land," thought Charlotte, "the beautiful sun sinks to rest;" she gazed on his fading light. How sweetly since those days the poet Lover has written in his own exquisite song, "The Land of the West."

"The sun in the gorgeous east chaseth the night,
When he riseth, refreshed in his glory and might;
But where doth he go when he seeks his sweet rest?
Oh! doth he not haste to the beautiful west?"

The Captain approached, looking very thoughtful.

"How luminous the waters appear, Roland," exclaimed Charlotte. "I never remarked them so before."

"This appearance surely portends wind, Madam," said Captain Waring, hearing her observation; "this phenomenon is frequently seen in the Mediteranean sea, and in warm climates, seldom indeed in winter time. I have rarely observed it in these seas, and never before but in Summer or Autumn.—Some knowing ones will tell you this shining light is caused by the phosphorus that all the putrid matter in the seas emit; others from the electric fluid, which, in the process of evaporation rapidly evolves; and others again say, the waters are filled with myriads of small luminous insects, which shine out this way: for my part, I only know that it foretells a storm."

"Not to-night, I trust, Captain Waring," said Charlotte, rather alarmed.

"Oh, madam, we'll brave it gallantly," answered he, "you must not fear; and if you took refuge in your cabin it is the safest place."

Charlotte went below, and not long was the Captain's conjecture without proof of its truth, and she, fearing to undress, sat on a chair by her berth, feeling rather nervous. Midnight came and brought such a gale as made the stoutest heart on board quake. The sea rolled in billows, mountains high, and the ship was tossed to and fro, the sails were soon rent to pieces, the rudder disabled, and the unmanageable vessel was borne along—now drifting on the surface of the surging waves, now almost engulfed by the raging element. The Captain came to Charlotte's cabin, pale with dread; his sister-in-law had risen from her berth, and held her baby in

her arms, convulsively sobbing forth her fears. Charlotte was on her knees, trying to invoke the Almighty Ruler of the angry ocean for their safety.

"You must feel terror, Mrs. Percie," said the Captain, kindly; "it is an awful night, and Providence alone now guides us. None can remain on deck, and where we all may be in the morning God alone knows; the men are prepared to expect the worst."

"My husband—my husband!" faintly ejaculated Charlotte; her companion sobbed loudly.

"He was asleep till the last awful squall," replied the Captain; "now I'll send him to you, as you are both up," and a tear glistened in his eye as he sent Roland to his beautiful young wife; and through that long, long night, where instant death awaited them in momentary expectation, Charlotte's heroic resignation calmed his feelings. She prayed,

long and fervently, by his side; she forgot herself—she soothed her companion—she lulled the frightened baby to sleep—and at each visit of the Captain, he left her thinking what a treasure her husband possessed. He had assembled all his men in the large cabin—he read prayers for them, and calmly each one waited the fate that seemed inevitable. To be taken thus in the prime and vigor of manhood from the midst of life is bitter, when health is strong—and many a tear gleamed that night in that frail ship, when home and its inmates were thought on. The morning dawned at length, and the Power that ruled the waves, reduced them to comparative tranquillity.

“We may be saved, Mrs. Percie,” said the Captain, smiling, putting his head to her cabin—“for the wind is lulling.”

“Oh, thank God,” sobbed Charlotte, “all the firmness of the night giving way.”

As the day brightened, the angry sea calmed, and at mid-day the ocean shone in beautiful tranquillity, and the disabled vessel lay on its bosom, but a useless thing almost—the chain plate had given way—the rudder was gone—the sails rent in ribbons.

“It was a mercy indeed we were not swamped,” thought the Captain, eyeing the scene of desolation from the well washed deck—his cargo had been all swept overboard—he looked around, they were far from land, at neither side could he descry it, his only hope lay in some vessel picking them up.—The stillness that reigned around was horrid in their present dismantled state, and his oldest sailor could devise no remedy by which the ship could be rendered serviceable. The day rolled heavily on—though hope cheered many a heart in that vessel.

The night too succeeded in beautiful calmness, but none could sleep soundly—lights

were struck, and guns of distress fired at intervals during the night; the morning rose and found them still on the boundless sea, far from land. Another day and night lagged cheerlessly on, and hope began to fail many on board.

"To-morrow may bring us some relief, Captain Waring," said Charlotte sweetly, "and then we shall forget all our sufferings."

"God bless you, kind prophetess," replied he, "and may He fulfil your prophecy—for in His hands are life and death."

During those days of intense anxiety—of despair almost to many, Charlotte had a kind word, an encouraging hope to cheer each one. The Captain had many a time congratulated Roland on the possession of "this pearl beyond price," as he called her.

The Sabbath morning broke beautifully on the still, tranquil ocean. A slight ripple broke

over its glassy surface, and the vessel went gently on before the breeze. The Captain paced the deck, and vainly looked around the ocean. The blue sky alone was reflected on its bosom, and he descended to his cabin trying to hope the day would bring some help.

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